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THE LIFE OF JAMES McNEILL WHISTLER

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PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST

THE LIFE OF JAMES McNEILL WHISTLER

BY

E. R. AND J. PENNELL

IN TWO VOLUMES

ILLUSTRATED

VOLUME II

LONDON: WILLIAM HEINEMANN
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CHAPTER XXV. AMONG FRIENDS. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-ONE TO EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-SEVEN

IT was in the summer of 1884 that J. met Whistler. Up to this time we have had to rely upon what Whistler and those who knew him have told us. Henceforward we write from our own knowledge.

This is J.'s story of the meeting:

"I first saw Whistler on one of those brilliant days (July 13, 1884) which come sometimes in summer in London, though we have a way of thinking they do not exist out of Italy. I had just been married, had just started on a journey of work that is not yet at an end, and the wonder, the mystery, the very smell of London had taken hold of me with a power they have not yet lost. Among the many things I had been asked to do in this marvellous place, by Mr. Gilder, editor of the *Century Magazine,* was the illustration of a series of articles on *Old Chelsea* by Dr. B. E. Martin. Mr. Gilder suggested—or was it Mr. Drake, the art editor?—that if I could get Whistler to etch, draw or paint something in Chelsea for the *Century,* naturally the *Century* would be very glad to have it. And this is the beginning of the whole story.

"It so happened that some of his water-colours and pastels, mostly of Chelsea, were on view in a Bond Street gallery—a gallery I remember vaguely as all colour, with the little pictures telling on the walls. It was his first show at Dowdeswell's—*Notes. Harmonies, Nocturnes*—opened in May

1884. There his address was given me : No. 13 Tite Street. I remember more vividly the feelings with which I started for Chelsea. I was going to meet a man whose work I had reverenced from the first moment of seeing it in the Claghorn Collection two or three years before, and I was going to him, not out of curiosity, but sent by a great magazine to ask a great master to work for it.

" I remember that the house did not strike me. I do not remember at all how I got to it. All I remember is the man and his work.

" I knocked, the door was partly opened by some one, and I handed in my letter from Mr. Gilder. I was left in the street for some minutes. Then the door was opened wide, and Whistler met me in the hallway. Save for his little black ribbon tie, he was all in white—his waistcoat had long sleeves—and every minute it seemed as if he muts begin to juggle with glasses. For, to be honest, my first thought when I saw him was that a bar-keeper had strayed from a Philadelphia saloon into a Chelsea studio. Never had I seen that thick mass of black curling hair before except on the head of the man at Finelli's in Chestnut Street, or of a gondolier at Venice ; but there, in the midst, was the white lock, and never anywhere had I seen such keen, brilliant eyes as those that flashed at me from under their thick, bushy eyebrows. Then I found that Whistler was all nerves, all life, all action, and, frankly, at first I did not like him.

" At the end of the hall into which he took me was a shadowy passage to the right, some steps, a light room beyond, and there, on an easel, the portrait of a little man with a violin—the *Sarasate* that had, I believe, never been seen outside the studio. Whistler stopped me in the passage, and asked me what I thought of the picture framed in by the darkness. I cannot recall his words I wish I could. But I was

too overwhelmed by the dignity of the picture to remember what he may, or may not, have said. I have had my doubts since. I had long talks with other artists when the portrait hung near *The Mother* and the *Carlyle* in the London Memorial Exhibition, where, in a way, it seemed small and not in the least overwhelming. But I have been convinced of my mistake. By itself, as I saw it in the studio, or as one sees it in a print, it is most dignified. But to give its proper effect, it should be placed by itself as *Las Meniñas* is in Madrid. Hanging with *The Mother* and the *Carlyle*, both painted in the full light of his studio, it necessarily loses something. What Whistler was trying to do, and what he succeeded in doing, was to paint the man on the shadowy concert platform as the audience saw him. Sarasate, while posing, often played to Whistler, and so, no doubt, strengthened and emphasised the impression. It should also be remembered that the *Carlyle* and *The Mother* are not life-size. They look life-size because Whistler meant that they should. The *Sarasate*, on the other hand, is intended to look small, less than life-size, as he would appear when seen away up on the concert stage. It is painted on the coarse canvas he usually preferred at this period. M. Duret has since told us that Sarasate cared neither for painting nor for his portrait, though Whistler also decorated a room for him in Paris. It was Goldschmidt, his manager, the owner of a Nocturne, who cared. Mr. Sidney Starr says :

> ' In the Tite Street studio Whistler closed the large door and used a narrow one, three steps leading up to it. Leaving this door open, he would go down the steps and stand in the passage to look at his work. Through the door, the light coming from the large window on the left, one saw the tall canvas. The portrait finished, one forgot the canvas and became conscious only of M. Duret, Sarasate, or of Rosa Corder in the late afternoon light. I remember one afternoon he met me at the front door and led me by the arm to the foot of the steps, saying, "There

he is, eh ? Isn't that it, eh ? All balanced by the bow, you know. See how he stands ! " It was *Sarasate*, and when the picture was exhibited, Whistler said, " They talk about my painting Sarasate standing in a coal-cellar, and stupidities like that. I only know that he looked just as he does in my picture when I saw him play in St. James's Hall." '

" Later on, Whistler brought out *The Falling Rocket*. ' Well now, what do you think of that ? What is it ? '

" I said fireworks, and I supposed one of the Cremorne pictures.

" ' Oh, you know, do you ? It's the finest thing that ever was done. Critics pitch into it. But bring tots, idiots, imbeciles, blind men, children, anything but Englishmen or Ruskin, here, and of course they know—even you, who stole the name—oh, shocking !—of my *Little Venice*.'

" This remark referred to an etching of mine which had been published under the title of *Little Venice*. Why Whistler did not resent this for long, nor let it interfere with our friendship later, I do not know, for Mr. Frederick Keppel has told me he felt bitterly about it at the time :

' I remember every word of my colloquy with Whistler about yourself. It took place at his apartments, Tite Street, Chelsea. I had casually mentioned your name, when Whistler said in a dry and careless way, " I don't know him."—" Joseph Pennell," I answered.—" Never heard of him ! " said Whistler.—" Why, hang it," said I, " you know him perfectly well,—Joseph Pennell, the artist ! "—" Oh ! " said Whistler, " *that* man. I once knew him but I don't know him now. He had the audacity to appropriate the title of *Little Venice* to one of his etchings ; now that title belongs to me. No, I don't know him at all." '

" Whistler also brought out some of the pastels, little figures, one of which he said was a classic.

" And he talked, and again I forget completely what he said until, finally, I suggested, as quietly as I could, what I had come for, and there was no reason to beat about the

PORTRAIT OF PABLO SARASATE

Arrangement in Black

STUDY FOR THE "SARASATE"

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bush, for I did not think there was any greater honour than to see one's work in the pages of the *Century*.

"I do not recollect exactly how he refused. There was some excuse delightfully made. Then, suddenly, he called for some one who appeared from a corner. And Whistler said to him, 'Here's a chance for you. I have no time. But you will do these things.'

"This was not at all what I had bargained for, and I said so promptly. 'No, Mr. Whistler, I was asked to come here and ask you to let us have some drawings of Chelsea. If you cannot, why then, I'll make them myself.'

"'Stay and lunch,' Whistler said, and there was lunch, a wonderful curry, in a bright dining-room—the yellow and blue room. Later on, he took me down to the Embankment, and, though it seems so little like him, showed me the Carlyle statue and Turner's little old house. He pointed out his own houses in Lindsey Row, and told me of an old photographer, who had reproduced all his pictures and who had photographed all the bits of old Chelsea, pulled down of recent years. I remember, too, asking Whistler about the Thames plates, and his telling me they were all done on the spot. And then he drove down in a cab with me to Piccadilly, and asked me to come and see him again.

"The next Sunday I went with Mr. Stephen Parrish to see Haden at his house in Harley Street. We were taken to the top of the house where Haden was working on the mezzotint of the *Breaking up of the Agamemnon*. I asked him—I must have almost paralysed him by doing so—what he thought of Whistler, and he told me that if ever he had to sell either his collection of Whistlers or of Rembrandts, the Rembrandts should go first. Downstairs, in a sort of conservatory at the back of the dining-room, was the printing press. Lady Haden was very charming and joined us at lunch. So also did Mr. Hopkinson Smith, resurrecting vast

numbers of American 'chestnuts.' I can recall that both Parrish and I found him very much in the way, and I can also recall his getting us into such a state that, as we came down one of the streets leading into Piccadilly, Parrish vented his irritation on one of the public goats which, in those days, acted both as scavengers and police for London. As the goat put down his head to defend himself, Parrish put up his umbrella, and the goat fled into the open door of a club. What happened after that we did not wait to discover.

"I saw Whistler only once more that summer. He was in Charing Cross station, standing in front of the bookstall. He wore a black frock coat, white trousers, patent leather shoes, top hat, and he was carrying, the only time I ever saw it, the long cane. I did not speak to him, and I liked his looks still less than when I first met him. Because people, ignorantly, called this costume Bohemian and eccentric, the idea got about that he was slovenly and careless. As a matter of fact, there was no more carefully dressed man in London.

"Early in the autumn of 1884 we went to Italy, and it was several years before I began to meet Whistler often, and really got to know him, and understand that his appearance was to him merely a part of the 'joke of life.'"

Mr. Keppel, who, with Mr. Avery, was one of the first to make Whistler's etchings known in America, saw him at this same period and his record of his first visit to Tite Street will be read with interest as a parallel to J.'s. It has always been a matter of regret to us that Whistler soon took offence at something he attributed to Mr. Keppel. We often tried to bring about a meeting between them, for we knew it would smooth out the difference, but, unhappily, we never succeeded. Mr. Keppel writes in his story of *A Day with Whistler:*

"Our first meeting, long years ago, took place at his rooms in Tite Street, Chelsea. My errand did not concern myself at all: I simply undertook to deliver to him a picture entrusted to me at Whistler's request by an absent friend of his, who told me in French parlance the master would be *visible* from nine to ten o'clock every morning. I reached his house about half-past nine, and was admitted by a servant, who showed me into a reception room in which the prevailing colour scheme was a pale and delicate yellow. The room at first looked bare and empty, yet its general effect was both novel and pleasing. Having sent up my card, upon which I had written a memorandum stating the cause of my visit, I soon heard a light step, and a moment later I set eyes on Whistler for the first time. It was his humour not to enter his own reception room, but to remain at the threshold glaring at me through his monocle and holding his watch open in his hand. There he was—the Whistler of so many portraits and so many caricatures—a slender, alert little man, but so gracefully proportioned, that, as he stood framed in his own doorway, it was not easy to determine whether he was big, middle-sized or small. . . . He said: 'Now, I have just four minutes to spare; what is it that you want?' Let me here confess that I felt somewhat nettled at this unexpected reception—seeing that I had come long miles out of my way solely to oblige an absent friend of his and, incidentally, to oblige Whistler himself—and so I set myself to break down the repellent pose which he saw fit to assume. Having delivered to him the little picture which I had brought, I gave him no immediate opening to snub me further. With this intent I talked about the friend who had sent me to him; I described to him the fine position in which his own contribution to the Paris Salon had been hung; I told him some flattering things which had been said by the right sort of people about it; I gave him news, which I knew would interest him, of other friends of his, and, like Browning's hero, I kept up 'any noise bad or good,' until he so far unbent as to enter the room where I was. Abruptly he then put the question to me: 'Are you fond of pictures?' To this I made answer: 'Such pictures as may be seen *here*, yes.' 'Come to the studio,' said he; and thus began a memorable day which only ended when he had to go out to dine at eight in the evening, and even then he delayed—calmly remarking that people always waited dinner for him no matter how late he came. This long day was passed in the studio, except when we adjourned to the dining-room for lunch,

where I remember that the table was decorated with yellow flowers and that the dishes were hollow, the hollow space being filled with boiling water for the purpose of keeping the eatables hot.

"But it was in his studio that Whistler was at his brightest and best. Surely never was a man so far removed from being commonplace. His alert wit kept flashing like summer lightning. . . . Much of his talk that day was of a denunciatory character. Some eminent persons were severely castigated, but the vials of his bitterest wrath were poured on the devoted heads of certain prominent artists, and more especially on those who painted portraits. While speaking on this subject, he gave expression to one opinion which seems to be so sound and right, that it should be recorded here: 'To paint what is called a great portrait in England,' said he, 'the artist must overload everything with strong contrasts of violent colours. His success with the rich, ignorant public is assured if only he succeeds in setting his colours shouting against each other. Go to the exhibition at the Royal Academy and see what is called the picture of the year—Mr. A.'s portrait of Mr. B. You can easily find it by seeing the crowd that stands staring at it all day long. Mix with this crowd and get near to the picture; fill your eye with it; then turn round and look at the faces of the living spectators—how quiet in tone *they* are! If A.'s portrait is right, surely every living man and woman you see in the crowd must be wrong!'

"From all this depressing pessimism, he rapidly turned to another subject, which he proceeded to treat with enthusiastic optimism; for he began to talk of his own works.

"There was standing on a perpendicular easel in the studio his superb portrait of the violinist, Sarasate—the same picture which afterwards created such a sensation at the Paris Salon. The delighted artist conducted me through a doorway which faced the picture, and, further on, to the end of a long corridor. There turning round, we gazed on the picture framed in a vista of corridor and doorway. Laying his hand on my shoulder he said to me: 'Now, isn't it beautiful?' 'It certainly is,' I answered. 'No,' said he, 'but *isn't* it beautiful?' 'It is indeed,' I replied. Then, raising his voice to a scream, with a not too wicked blasphemy, and bringing his hand down upon his knee with a bang, so as to give superlative emphasis to the last word of his sentence, he cried, '——————— it! Isn't it *beautiful?*' If I could do no other thing as well as Whistler, I could at least shout as loud as he could

scream, so turning to him, and adopting his little 'swear word' (as a quotation, of course) I shouted into his face '———— it, it *is* !' This third declaration seemed to satisfy him, and so we returned to the studio.

"More manifestations of his delight in his own work were to follow : He had just received the proof sheets of his now famous book, *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies*,* and he asked me to read some of it aloud, so that he could 'hear how it sounded.' Now I believe it is not possible for any one to read a piece of fine literature aloud, and to do it well, unless he has read it before and knows what is coming in the text ; and so I was not at all surprised when, after I had read a few pages to him, he called out 'Stop ! You are murdering it ! Let me read it to you.' He was quite right ; I *was* murdering it ! So we changed places. He read his own book admirably, and kept at it for about two hours."

* In one particular Mr. Keppel is wrong, What Whistler read to him must have been the notes for the *Ten o'Clock—The Gentle Art* was not published until 1890.

CHAPTER XXVI. AMONG FRIENDS. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-ONE TO EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-SEVEN CONTINUED

WHISTLER said he could not afford to keep a friend, but he was never without one, never without many. A photograph, taken in his studio in 1881, shows who a few of these friends now were. In it he is the centre of a group of five; the four others are Julian and Waldo Story, the artists, sons of W. W. Story; Frank Miles, a painter from whom great things were expected, but who died before they were realised; and the Hon. Frederick Lawless, a sculptor. In the background of the photograph is the little statuette everybody wanted to know the merit of, which was explained one day by Whistler, "Well, you know—why—you can take it up and—you can set it down!" Mr. Lawless writes us that Whistler modelled the little figure, though we never heard from Whistler that he modelled anything, and though Professor Lantéri, among others who frequently visited him at this time, assures us that he never knew Whistler as sculptor. Mr. Lawless says:

> "When Whistler lived in his London studio, he often modelled graceful statuettes, and one day he put up one on a vase, asking me to photograph it. I said he must stand beside it. He said, 'But we must make a group and all be photographed, and that I was to call out to his servant when to take the lid off the camera, and when to put it back.' I then developed the negative in his studio."

Mr. Francis James was another friend as often at 13 Tite

A GROUP IN WHISTLER'S STUDIO, TITE STREET, 1881

Street as he had been at 21 Cheyne Walk, with many memories of days and evenings there, especially of one summer evening when M. Coquelin, *Aîné*, and a large party came to supper, and Whistler kept them until dawn and then took them to see the sun rise over the Thames, a spectacle few of them had ever before witnessed.

For two or three years nobody was more intimately and sympathetically associated with Whistler than Sir Rennell Rodd, the present Minister for Great Britain at Stockholm. Of their friendship, in which the only break was caused by the absence of one or the other from London, Sir Rennell Rodd writes us :

> " It was in '82, '83 that I saw most of him—in Tite Street, not the White House. That had already passed into the hands of Quilter. But there was another house nearly next door where he had a studio. Frank Miles, Waldo and Julian Story, Walter Sickert, Harper Pennington, and, at one time, Oscar Wilde, were constantly there. Jimmy, unlike many artists, liked a *camarade* about the place while he was working, and talked and laughed and raced about all the time, putting in the touches delicately, after matured thought, ten yards away, with preternaturally long brushes. There was a poor fellow who had been a designer for Minton—but his head had given way, and he was already quite mad—used to be there day after day for months, and draw innumerable sketches on scraps of brown paper, cartridge boards, anything—often full of talent but always mad. Well, Jimmy humoured him and made his last weeks of liberty happy in their way. Eventually he had to be removed to an asylum, and died raving mad. I used to help Whistler often with printing his etchings. It was very laborious work. He would manipulate a plate for hours with the ball of the thumb and the flat of the palm to get just the right superficial ink left on the plate, while I damped and roughed the paper, which came out of old folio volumes, the first and last sheets, with a fairly stiff brush. And often for a whole morning's work, only one or two prints were achieved which satisfied his critical eye, and the rest would be destroyed. There was a Venetian one which gave him infinite trouble in the printing.

"He was the kindest of men to his old friends, though he was indeed too handy with his wand-like cane. In any financial transaction he was scrupulously honourable, though, of course, he never had much money at his disposal.

"We had great fun over the many correspondences and the catalogues elaborated in those days in Tite Street. . . . He was demoniacal in controversy and the spirit of elfin mischief was developed in him to the point of genius. . . . Pellegrini * was much at Whistler's in those days also, and in a way the influence of Whistler was fatal to him. His admiration for him was unbounded, and he abandoned his own legitimate art, in which, as Jimmy used to say, 'he had taught all the others what none of them had been able to learn,' and took to trying to paint portraits in Whistler's manner without any success.

"One of the few modern painters I have ever heard him praise was Albert Moore, and I am not sure that was not to some extent due to a personal liking for the man. It always struck me his literary judgments, if he ever happened to express any, were extraordinarily sound and often very brilliant in summing up the merits or demerits of a writer.

"He had also an extraordinary power of putting a man in his place, if the occasion warranted. I remember a breakfast which Waldo Story gave at Dieudonné's. Every one there was by way of having painted a picture, or written a book, or in some way or another having outraged the Philistine, with the exception of one young gentleman, whose *raison d'être* there was not so apparent as was the height of his collars and the glory of his attire. He nevertheless ventured to lay down the law on certain matters which seemed beyond his province, and even went so far as to combat some dictum of the master's, who, readjusting his eye-glass,

* Carlo Pellegrini was an Italian artist who came to England and drew caricatures, under the names of Singe and Ape, for *Vanity Fair*. These caricatures, unlike the characterless, artless work of his vastly more popular successors to-day, were works of art, and not the mere scrawls of unteachable amateurs. Whistler always appreciated his work, and others always considered that the caricature of Whistler in the overcoat with the three capes was more of a portrait. There was a large painting too, a full-length, Whistler in evening-dress, introduced, for some reason no one can now explain to us, in one of the Gaiety burlesques. "And here is the inventor of black-and-white" was announced, and Pellegrini, we have been told, wheeled the portrait, on an easel, on to the stage. It fell flat, it seems, and it is hard to-day to see where the point could have been supposed to lie. The picture now belongs to a collector in New York.

looked pleasantly at him, and said: 'And whose son are you?'

"I shall be glad to see justice done to my dear old friend, with whom I spent some of the best moments of my life, and who greatly flattered me, believing him one of the very few geniuses I have known, by caring for my sympathy and appreciation."

For two or three years, Oscar Wilde was so much with Whistler that everybody who went to the studio found him there, just as everybody who went much into society saw the two men together. Wilde had come up from Oxford not long before the Ruskin trial, bringing with him a reputation as the most brilliant undergraduate who had ever flashed upon the University, as the winner of the Newdigate prize, and as the apostle of "beauty." Many a reputation is lost on the way between Oxford and London, but his was only strengthened. He was brilliant among men of the world, witty sayings of his were repeated eagerly and his youth seemed to excuse the affectation of his pose as reformer. He was at once sought after, and had the world of London at his feet. It was natural that, of all the men he met, none should appeal to him more powerfully than Whistler. At Oxford, Wilde had been a follower of Ruskin, had even broken stones for that famous road which was to lead Ruskin's young enthusiasts to art and their own salvation; he had studied under Pater; he had accepted the æsthetic principles of those other brilliant young men who were at Oxford before him, William Morris and Burne-Jones and therefore, also, of their master, Rossetti. But Ruskin's waywardness already made it impossible for the most ardent to follow him far, Pater was a recluse, Rossetti's health was broken, while Morris and Burne-Jones were the centres of a little esoteric group of their own. When Wilde came to London, Whistler was in his prime as man and artist; he was prominent in the greater world that received Wilde

with open arms ; he was equally sought after, and he, too, took pleasure in the fact. His daily life was filled, as a matter of course, with the elements of beauty which Wilde, at Oxford, had cultivated as something almost sacred and sacramental. In Tite Street rare blue and white was set out, not as symbols of the true faith, but for everyday use ; flowers bloomed, not as pledges of "culture," but simply for their colour and grace of form ; beauty was accepted as no new discovery, but as the one and only end of art since the first artist drew a line and knew it to be beautiful. Whistler in himself and in his work, quite simply and with no parade, realised all that to the undergraduate had been theory in need of a prophet.

It was as natural that Whistler, on his side, should be flattered by the homage Wilde paid him. He was looked upon as the world's jester after his return from Venice when Wilde's devotion drew them into closer intimacy. The younger men who were now gathering about Whistler, had still to make their name and reputation. Wilde's name was in every man's mouth, he had not outworn the reputation brought from Oxford, he shone with the splendour of the great work he was expected to produce. He was the most promising poet and man of letters of his generation. To be singled out for his allegiance was flattering. More than this, to have his companionship was amusing. There is no question of the charm of his personality. We remember our delight when we met him on his famous lecture tour in America, and hardly knew whether to wonder more at his magnificence on the platform, where he faced with calmness rows of college boys each bearing a lily and stood with composure their collective emotion as he sipped a glass of water, or his gaiety and exuberance and wit when we talked with him afterwards. It has been said that he gave the best of himself in his talk. If Whistler liked always to

have some one with him in the studio, his pleasure was increased a hundredfold when this some one was so brilliant and witty as Wilde undoubtedly was.

For a while, they were constant companions. Wilde spent hours in the studio, he came repeatedly to Whistler's Sunday breakfasts, he presided at Whistler's private views. Whistler went out and about with him everywhere. There were few social functions at which they were not both conspicuous. At parties and receptions, you could count upon finding the company divided into two groups, one gathered round Whistler, the other round Wilde. It was the fashion to compare them. To the world that ran after them, that thought itself honoured, or notorious, by their presence, they seemed inseparable in these days—though they were fundamentally quite unlike one another.

It was inevitable that this intimate friendship should prove of short duration. M. Duret thinks the trouble began when Whistler discovered how shallow was Wilde's knowledge of art, for he could never endure anybody in the studio who did not understand his work with sympathy and intelligence. Certainly, Whistler, on one occasion, wrote of Wilde as of a man " with no more sense of a picture than of the fit of a coat." *The Gentle Art* shows that Whistler was also irritated with Wilde for borrowing from him, as he thought, too freely. That Oscar Wilde took his good where he found it, as his critics said of him, is neither more nor less than what genius has always done—what Whistler did himself. But the genius, from the good thus taken, evolves something of his own. Wilde, at the high tide of his social triumph, which he was enjoying with all the zest of youth, was content to shine personally and to let the great things expected of him wait. The drain upon his intelligence and his wit was exhausting, and, probably unconsciously, he appropriated and reproduced the good he borrowed from

others exactly as he found it. When it was question of wit, there was no one to whom Wilde could go, as his equal or rather as his superior, except Whistler. A characteristic story of their relations in this respect has been often told. After one of Whistler's brilliant sallies, Wilde said, "I wish I had said that, Whistler." "You will, Oscar, you will," was Whistler's answer. In matters of art, Wilde had everything to learn from Whistler, who, though ever generous to his friends, resented Wilde's preaching as his original doctrines the truths which Whistler had taught for years. This can be seen very plainly in *The Gentle Art.* "Oscar" had "the courage of the opinions . . . of others!" and again: "Oscar"

> "went forth, on that occasion, as my St. John—but, forgetting that humility should be his chief characteristic, and unable to withstand the unaccustomed respect with which his utterances were received, he not only trifled with my shoe, but bolted with the latchet!"

Mr. Alan S. Cole, in 1884, noted in his diary that Whistler "was strong on Oscar Wilde's notions of art which he derived from him (Jimmy)." Mr. Herbert Vivian tells the story of a dinner given by Whistler after Wilde had been lecturing:

> "'Now, Oscar, tell us what you said to them,' Whistler kept insisting, and Wilde had to repeat all the phrases, while Whistler rose and made solemn bows, with his hand across his breast, in mock acceptance of his guests' applause. . . . The cruel part of the plagiarism lay in the fact that, when Mr. Whistler published his *Ten o'Clock*, many people thought it had all been taken from Wilde's lecture."

It was doubly provoking because it seemed as if by his indiscriminate lecturing, Wilde's endeavour was to force art upon the middle classes, to whom Whistler believed it could only be disastrous in its influence. Altogether, Whistler grew more and more exasperated by the use he

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thought Wilde was making of him until the merest trifle irritated him. Their friendship was closest in the early 'eighties when Whistler was bewildering the world by deliberate eccentricities of dress, eccentricities which Wilde copied rather clumsily. The world, that did not know them personally, soon mistook one for the other and actually supposed Whistler to be as much the founder of the so-called "Æsthetic" fad of the day as Wilde. When Gilbert and Sullivan's opera *Patience* was produced, Bunthorne, who was obviously intended for Wilde, appeared with Whistler's black curls and white lock, moustache, "tuft," and single eye-glass and laughed with Whistler's familiar "ha! ha!" When Whistler saw Wilde in a Polish cap and "green overcoat befrogged, and wonderfully befurred," he desired him to "restore those things to Nathan's, and never again let me find you masquerading the streets of my Chelsea in the combined costumes of Kossuth and Mr. Mantalini!" To be in danger of losing, in the eyes of the world, his own marked individuality was bad enough, but to have his own studied eccentricities handed over to another man who rendered them ridiculous was worse. No one probably summed up the position better than the *Times* reviewer noticing Wilde's recently published *Collected Works*.

> "With a mind not a jot less keen than Whistler's, he had none of the conviction, the high faith, for which Whistler found it worth while to defy the crowd. Wilde had poses to attract the crowd. And the difference was this, that while Whistler was a prophet who liked to play Pierrot, Wilde grew into a Pierrot who liked to play the prophet."

It would have been more exact to say that if Whistler ever played Pierrot, it was with a purpose. Where art was concerned, he was serious, and could endure no trifling, could countenance no shams. At this period, Wilde was

serious about nothing. Like Mr. Rose in the *New Republic*, his two topics were "self-indulgence and art," and his interest in both was but part of his youthful pose and bid for notoriety. He might jest about himself but his flippancy, if art was his subject, became to Whistler a crime. The only way he showed his resentment was by refusing to take Wilde seriously about anything. Even when Wilde was married, he was not allowed to forget this, for Whistler telegraphed to the church, "Fear I may not be able to reach you in time for the ceremony. Don't wait." Later, in Paris, he called Wilde "Oscar, *bourgeois malgré lui*," a witticism none could appreciate better than the Parisians. As soon as he began to make a jest of Wilde, he ended, once and for all, that friendship to which, while it lasted, London society owed so much gaiety and brilliancy.

The relation between Whistler and many of the artists now often in the studio was less that of friends than of Master and Followers, as they called themselves. He was forty-six when he returned from Venice, and there were men of the new generation who shared none of the doubt of his contemporaries, but who believed in his art and looked up to him as artist. Whistler always had the power of attracting people to him, and the devotion of one special group became almost infatuation. They were ready to do anything for him. We have heard of families estranged and of engagements of marriage broken because of him. They fought his battles; ran his errands; spied out the land for him; read his letters, when he wished it, to everybody they met. They formed a genuine little court about him. They exaggerated everything, even their devotion, and became, virtually, caricatures of Whistler, as excessive in their imitation as in their devotion. He denied the right of any, save the artist, to speak authoritatively of art; they started a club to train the Classes—Princes, Prime Ministers, Patrons, Am-

bassadors, Members of Parliament—to blind faith in Master and Followers. Whistler mixed his colours before putting them on the palette, filling little tubes with them; the Followers mixed theirs in vegetable dishes and kept them in milk cans, labelled Floor, Face, Hair, Lips. He had a table palette; they adopted it, but added hooks to hang their cans of paint on. He used his paint very liquid—the "sauce" of the Nocturnes; they used such quantities of medium that as much went on the floor as on the canvas, and, before a picture was blocked in, they were wading in liquid masterpieces. Many of his brushes were very large; they worked with whitewash brushes. They copied his personal peculiarities as assiduously. As an example of the absurd lengths to which they would go, it is said that one evening at a dinner when he wore a white waistcoat and all the buttons fell out owing to the carelessness of the laundress, a young painter, seeing it buttonless, hurried from the room and returned with his in the same condition, under the impression that Whistler had set a new fashion.

Whistler accepted their devotion, and, finding them willing to squander their time upon him, monopolised it as willingly. There was always plenty for everybody to do for him in the studio. If they afterwards complained that he took advantage of them, he proved to them that the fault was theirs. Mr. Menpes writes:

> "We seldom asked Whistler questions about his work. . . . If we had, he would have been sure to say, 'Pshaw! you must be occupied with the Master, not with yourselves. There is plenty to be done.' If there was not, Whistler would always make a task for you—a picture to be taken in to the Dowdeswells', or a copper-plate to have a ground put on it."

No one respected the work of others more than Whistler. But if others did not respect it themselves and made him a present of their time, he did not refuse. If he allowed them

to accompany him in his little journeys, it was because they were so eager to be useful. When he went with two of the Followers to St. Ives, in the winter of 1883–84, they were up at six o'clock because it pleased him, and they scarcely dared eat unless he rang the bell. One prepared his panels, mixed his colours, and cleaned his brushes, taking a day off for fishing if Whistler chose, dutifully abjuring the right to sentiment if he objected. The chances are that Whistler saw the humour in this attitude towards him more clearly than anybody, and was, on that account, the more exacting. It was said that the Followers were not allowed by him even to rely upon their own opinions. Mr. Sidney Starr writes that once, when Mr. Walter Sickert ventured to praise Leighton's *Harvest Moon*, at the Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition, Whistler, hearing of it, telegraphed: "The Harvest Moon rises over Hampstead [where Mr. Sickert lived] and the cocks of Chelsea crow." The Followers, however, knew that if they were of use to Whistler, he was infinitely of more use to them, and that submission to his rule and exposure to his wit were a small price to pay for all he helped them to learn.

Even Mr. Menpes, who, in *Whistler as I Knew Him*, makes more of the follies than the advantages of the Followers, cannot entirely ignore their debt to Whistler. It was their privilege to work with him not only in the studio, but in the street, hunting with him for his little shops, corners and models, and painting at his side; often walking home with him, after a dinner-party or supper at the club, and being trained by him to observe and memorise, as he did, the night and its effects. It was their privilege to know him as the artist absorbed in his work and full of kindliness to the student, when to the world he often seemed both insolent and audacious.

American artists, in London or passing through, began

PORTRAIT OF MONSIEUR THEODORE DURET

Arrangement in Flesh Colour and Black

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to make their way to his studio. Mr. Otto Bacher has published in the *Century* recollections of his stay in London in 1883, of Whistler's friendliness, of the pictures he saw in the studio, of their dining together nightly. In 1885, Mr. John W. Alexander came commissioned by the *Century* to make a drawing of him for a series of portraits of distinguished men it proposed to publish. Mr. Alexander tells us that Whistler posed for a little while very unwillingly, and criticised the drawing so long and so severely that Mr. Alexander finally tore it up. After that, he says, Whistler posed like a lamb. Mr. Harper Pennington has written for us his reminiscences of those years:

"... Whistler was more than kind to me. Through him came everything. He introduced me right and left, and called me 'pupil' in so doing: took me about to picture shows and pointed out the good and bad. I remember my astonishment the first occasion of his giving quite unstinted praise to modern work, on which he seldom lavished even positives. It was at the Royal Academy before one of those modern interiors of Orchardson's (for whom Whistler had expressed the most sincere appreciation). Well! he stood, delighted in front of the canvas, his hat almost on his nose, his 'tuft' sticking straight out as it did when he would catch his nether lip between his teeth—and, presently, a long forefinger went out and circled round a specially well-painted bit of yellow drapery—'It would have been nice to have painted that,' he said—almost as if he thought aloud.

"Another day we rushed to the National Gallery—'just to get the taste out of our mouths,' he said—after a couple of hours wandering in the Royal Academy wilderness of Hardy Annual Horrors. Whistler went at once to almost *smell* the Canalettos, while I went across the Gallery, attracted by the *Marriage à la Mode* series—and no wonder! It was my first sight of them. Up to that day I had supposed that what I was told, and had read, of Hogarth was the truth—the silly rubbish about his being *only* a caricaturist and so forth and so on; so that when confronted with those marvels of technical quality, I fairly gasped for breath, and—long before I had more than skimmed along the line of pictures—hurried over to where Whistler had his nose

against the largest Canaletto, seized his arm, and said hurriedly, 'Come over here quickly!' 'What's the matter?' said he, turning round. 'Why!—Hogarth!—He was a great Painter!' 'Sh—sh!' said he (pretending he was afraid that some one would overhear us). 'Sh—sh—yes!—I *know* it! . . . *But don't you tell 'em!*' Later, Hogarth was thoroughly discussed and his qualities pointed out with that incisive manner which one had to be familiar with to fully understand.

"Whistler was reasonable enough, not implacable, and preferred a joke to a serious battle any day. Often he came to me in the King's Road, breathing vengeance against this or that offensive person, but when he went away it was *invariably* with a *fin sourire* and one of his delicious little over-alliterated notes. His amazing clairvoyance in the matter of two notes to Leighton was made manifest at my writing-table. The P.R.A. wrote a very lame explanation to Whistler's first query as to why he had not been invited to the Academy *soirée*—as President of the R.S.B.A., '*ex-officio*,' or 'as Whistler.' He came into my room, one morning early—before I, sluggard! was awake—and read to me an outline of a note he meant to write—the merest sketch of it, and then set down to make it, with all the grace of diction, dainty composition and the pretty balanced Butterfly for signature. When that was done, he turned to me (I was dressing then) and said—'Now, Har-r-rpur-r-r' (he liked to burr those Rs in 'down-east' fashion). 'Now Har-r-r-pur-r-r' I know Leighton—he will *fumble* this. He will answer so and so—(describing the answer Leighton actually sent!)—and then I've got him!' He chuckled, wrote another note—the retort to Leighton's unwritten answer to Whistler's not yet posted first note—which he read to me. That retort was sent almost verbatim, only one slight change made necessary by a turn of phrase in Leighton's weak apology! That *was* 'Amazing' if you like. His anger soon burst out—the obvious jest *would* come—and the whole thing boiled itself down to a quip in the *World*, a line to 'Labby,' or a smart impertinence, with just sting enough to the offender himself.

"Of course, there were many most amusing *rencontres* in my little studio—where we all played together. The work went on downstairs in the big room. Dick (Corney) Grain came there of afternoons to try his new song; George Macquay, too shy to sing in company, would sit there warbling for hours, playing his accompaniments enchantingly! Oscar Wilde dropped in every

day almost, to loll, and smoke, and talk his best, while I worked away at my easel in the big room—all my memories are good ones, kindly, gracious, happy, and I grieve that *all* of those I spoke of—frequenters of my studio—except Macquay, are dead. The Beefsteak table would be peopled by the spirits of Pellegrini, Arthur Blouet, Dick Grain—Ah! *tutti quanti!* I doubt if jesting is—or *can* be—half as witty nowadays. One evening Whistler, Labouchère, and I, as listener (half the time in shouts of laughter) had a famous set-to, as we dined on grilled things at the Steak. Whistler began it, *à propos* of the *Gold Girl* which Labouchère had bought. They talked American—French—English—whatever language best set forth the spirit of their rapid fencing. Funny!—Good Lord!—I never yet have heard such talk as that! And they sat up there, grave as judges, Labouchère. J. A. McN W. | H. P. at the top of the table, disposed as I have drawn them. The other diners stretched their ears to find out what those men *could* say to make me laugh so heartily—but, bless you! one needed to have heard the *First* word—then *all* the rest to follow two such master-wits, both at their very best, both quiet—solemn—never cracking a smile—and thrusting at every lunge! I remember lots of things they said, but it would be like the score of some delicious song—a quantity of dots and lines with no sound to give them life."

CHAPTER XXVII. THE STUDIO IN THE FULHAM ROAD. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-FIVE TO EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-SEVEN

IN 1885, while we were still in Italy, Whistler moved from Tite Street and took a studio at No. 454 Fulham Road, not far from the Town Hall, on the opposite side of the street. A shabby gate leads into a shabby lane backed by a group of studios, of which his was one. Here Lady Archibald Campbell, M. Duret, and other sitters followed, and new portraits were begun. He was living at the time with "Maud" in a little house close by which he called the "Pink Palace," the outside of which he painted himself. Two shops have taken its place. But soon he moved to the Vale, Chelsea—"an amazing place," he said; "you might be in the heart of the country, and there, two steps away, is the King's Road"; the house is the first on the right after you go through the iron gates.

Of none of the studios or rooms in which he had worked up to this time do such accurate records remain. It was part of Whistler's policy during these years to keep well before the public, and one way of accomplishing it was by granting interviews to enterprising young journalists, and helping his friends in their descriptions of himself and his work written for publication. As he never thought any paper too insignificant for his notice when to answer its criticism gave him the opportunity to make the statements

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he wanted to make, so he did not mind where these interviews appeared so long as they did appear and contained the facts he wished known. One of the most interesting as a contemporary record of the 'eighties came out in the *Court and Society Review* (July 1, 1886). It was written by Mr. Malcolm C. Salaman, and its interest is in the details it gives of the studio and the work then to be seen there, and also in the fact that, in this article, Whistler allowed *A Further Proposition* to be printed for the first time, as far as we know, and a definition of his position as artist to be made of which he unmistakably was the inspiration.

"The plain white-washed walls, the unadorned wooden rafters, which partly form a loft for the stowing away of numerous canvases, panels, &c., the vast space unencumbered by furniture, and the large table-palette, all give the appearance of the working place where serious Art alone is tolerated, and where *dilettantism* would be an impertinence. Mr. Whistler is not so feeble as to aim at theatrical effects in his costume. The velvet coat, the embroidered smoking-cap, and other accessories of the fashionable, albeit incompetent painter, find no favour in his eyes, but in the black clothes of his ordinary wear, straight from the street or the garden, he stands at work at his easel. To those accustomed to studios the completeness of the arrangement of model, background, and surroundings—exactly in accordance with the scheme of the picture that is in progress—is striking, as striking indeed as the actual personality (always remarkable) of the talented artist. For his whole body seems instinct with energy and enthusiasm for his work, his face lit up with flashes of quick and strong thought, as that of a man who sees with his brains as well as with his eyes, and his brush-hand electric in sympathy with both.

"A word, by the way, about Mr. Whistler's palette, just alluded to. As I saw it the other day, the colours were systematically arranged, almost with the appearance of a picture. In the centre was white and on one side were the various reds leading up to black, while on the other side were the yellows leading up to blue. . . .

"And now a few words about some of the pictures which the

master has almost ready for exhibition, and which I hope the public will have an opportunity of seeing. A full-length figure of a girl in an out-door black dress, with a fur cape and a becoming hat trimmed with flowers. The face is daintily pretty and piquant and the grace and spontaneity of the attitude are charming. She stands against a dark background, and like all the figures that Mr. Whistler paints, she actually *lives* in her frame. The painting of the head is as refined and beautiful a piece of work as I have ever seen. 2. A full-length portrait of Mr. Walter Sickert, a favourite pupil of Mr. Whistler's and one of his cleverest disciples. He is in evening dress, and stands against a dark wall. The values of the black tones in this picture are wonderfully mastered. This is a picture that Velasquez himself would have delighted in—[it has vanished]—and still more so is another—3. A full-length portrait of a man with a very characteristic, rather Spanish-looking head, painted in a manner that is surely of the very greatest. [This may have been the portrait of Chase or of Eldon, also disappeared.] . . .

"A superb portrait of Mrs. Godwin, wife of the well-known architect, will rank among Mr. Whistler's *chefs-d'œuvre*. The lady stands in an ample red cloak over a black dress, against red draperies, and in her bonnet is a red plume. Her hands rest on her hips, and her attitude is singularly vivacious. The colour is simply wonderful, and is another positive proof of Mr. Whistler's pre-eminence as a colourist. This picture has been painted in artificial light, as has also another one of a lady seated in a graceful attitude, with one hand leaning over the back of a chair, while the other holds a fan. She wears a white evening dress, and is seen against a light background. Besides these pictures, Mr. Whistler showed me the other day the sketches of three pictures he is going to paint, consisting of various groups of several girls on the sea-shore. . . . [The *Projects*, evidently.] In addition to these sketches, I was also privileged to see a sketch of a *Venus*, very lovely in colour and design, the nude figure standing close to the sea with delicate gauze draperies being lightly lifted by the breeze. The studio is full of canvases and pictures in more or less advanced stages, and on one of the walls hang a number of pastel studies of the nude and partially draped female figure, showing in every touch the master hand. . . . A portrait sketch in black chalk of Mr. Whistler himself by M. Rajon, also hangs on the wall."

We do not quote *A Further Proposition.* It is too well known, and, besides, it can be read to-day in *The Gentle Art.* It was Whistler's explanation, in a few words, of the truth disdained by most modern portrait-painters, that a figure should keep well within the frame, and that flesh should be painted according to the light in which it is seen. This *Proposition* was written at first in answer to the criticism often made of his portraits that the " flesh was low in tone " ; it was preserved because it was an admirable statement of an artistic truth. At the time of writing it, evidently he was anxious that it should be seen and read widely. A year later, in 1887, it was printed again in an article written by Mr. Walter Dowdeswell for the *Art Journal* (April), the first appreciative article on Whistler in an important English magazine. Whistler was beginning to understand the value of the things he had written and to provide for their survival. He also gave to Mr. Dowdeswell for publication his reply to Hamerton's criticism, twenty years earlier, of the *Symphony in White, No. III.*, a reply which was not published at the time, probably for the good reason that the *Saturday Review,* in which the criticism appeared, did not then open its columns to correspondence.

Mr. Dowdeswell gives the same impression of the bigness and bareness of the studio, which, he says, was

> " painted white throughout, with just a *soupçon* of yellow in the rugs and matting ; plain almost to bareness, the lofty room is a veritable workshop. . . . A table covered with old Nankin china—for use as well as for sight—all the furniture. There is a crowd of canvases at the further end, and, pinned upon the wall on the right, a number of exquisite little notes of colour, and drawings of semi-draped figures from life, in pastels, on brown paper."

As a contrast to descriptions written with Whistler's knowledge and, no doubt, revision, we give one by Mr. Booth

Pearsall, who saw Whistler, for the only time, in the Fulham Road studio, and who has sent us his impression:

"I applied for admission and was bluffed off by a youth who said the Master was engaged and would not see any one. I said to tell Mr. Whistler an impatient Irishman waited his greeting and had a letter of introduction to present. The youth came back after some minutes, asking me to give him the letter and my card for Mr. Whistler. I gave them and told the boy I would gladly wait his convenience but my stay in London was short. The youth returned at once and said the Master would be glad to see me. I followed and entered a large room with a high light in the roof. A lady was sitting for her portrait, or rather standing in a corner on a sheet. The evening had advanced to twilight. The lady turned out to be Lady Archibald Campbell, and I was introduced to her by Mr. Whistler in a charming way. He was as courteous and agreeable as a man could be, made me be seated on a huge Sheraton painted sofa, and then asked me about his Irish friends. There was a group of men in the studio, to whom I was also introduced—Mortimer Menpes, Theodore Roussel, Walter Sickert, William Stott of Oldham. Presently a cab was called for Lady Archibald Campbell and she was escorted to it by Whistler. On his return, he asked if I would like to see what he was working at. He brought out canvas after canvas, and asked me to say what I thought. I saw a number of portraits, some six or seven full-lengths, painted on coarse canvas like sail-cloth or sacking, and the very beautiful *St. Mark's, Venice.* Whistler asked me if Ruskin would admit he could draw architecture. I laughed, and said that the combination of tone and detail in atmosphere he had there, would be a joy to any lover of painting. I had about an hour and a half with the 'Master,' and I have never forgotten this interview—his sympathy and interest, his great courtesy and kindliness to me. The bare studio in the twilight, the well-worn painted Sheraton settee, the receipted bills on the wall, the Chippendale table used as palette, the group of colours on the shining glassy table top—white, yellow ochre, light-red, vermilion, and black in large masses, which were kept constantly mixed in a deft way by the youth who brought me in, the charming studies in pastel of the nude drawn on brown paper, which were pinned on the walls, the tiny graceful little figure, 'the silver flame' in the hair, and the alertness and decorum of all his movements

LA NOTE ROUGE

MAUD READING IN A HAMMOCK
(*Water-Colour*)

impressed me with memories I can never forget. His warm shake hands, his repeated invitations for me to see him when I was in London, and to write to him, made me very much pleased with my visit."

Mr. E. J. Horniman, M.P., who had a studio near by, tells us that he often saw on the roof of the omnibus stable (just behind the studio) pictures put out, exposed face up to the weather to tone and harden.

Many who visited the studio were no more surprised at its bareness than to find Whistler working in his ordinary clothes, or else all in white. He sometimes wore his white jacket; sometimes took off his coat and waistcoat, displaying spotless linen sleeves. He was as fastidious with his work as with his dress. He could not endure a slovenly palette, or brushes and paints in disorder. Unfortunately, after his wife's death, he ruined the two portraits of himself in the white painting jacket, which he had never exhibited, by changing the white to a black coat.

Other reminiscences of the Fulham Road period we have from Mr. William M. Chase, who came to London in 1886, with a suggestion that he and Whistler should paint each other; also that Whistler should go back to America with him and open a school. "Well, you know, that anyway will be all right, Colonel," as Whistler used to call Chase. "Of course, everybody will receive me; tug-boats will come down the Bay; it will all be perfect!" He thought so seriously of going, that for an interval he hesitated to send work to the London galleries, fearing he might want it for America.

The portraits were begun. Whistler painted a full-length of Chase, in frock-coat and top hat, a cane held jauntily across his legs. As he wrote afterwards, in a letter included in *The Gentle Art*, "I, who was charming, made him

beautiful on canvas, the Masher of the Avenues." At times Whistler was delighted with what he had done :

"Look at this, Colonel ! look at this ; did you ever see anything finer ? "

"It's meek or modest, they'll have to put on your tombstone ! "

"Say 'and' not 'or,' meek and modest ! H'm !—we l, you know, splendid, Chase ! "

Mr. Chase remembers an evening when they had to dine out, and Whistler had some distance to go home to dress with a longer distance to the dinner, and it was almost the hour. When he ventured to remind him, Whistler was indignant :

"What, Chase, you can think of dinner and time when we are just doing such beautiful things ? Stay where you are, and they will be glad to see me whenever I choose to come."

The portrait has never been seen since, but has vanished with many another. Chase painted Whistler in frock-coat, without a hat but with the long cane, against a yellow wall, and his portrait remains. He had intended stopping only a short time that summer in London, as he passed through to Madrid. But he found Whistler so delightful and stimulating that the visit to Madrid was put off. He has told many incidents of these few months spent with Whistler, in a lecture often delivered in the United States. A lecturer, no doubt, must adapt himself to his audience, and Mr. Chase has dwelt principally on Whistler, the man :—Whistler, the dandy, in white ducks, carrying the long bamboo cane ; Whistler, the fantastic, designing, for the tour in America, a white hansom with yellow reins and a white-and-yellow livery for the negro servant ; Whistler, the traveller, driving his companion to desperation. Their journey was to Belgium and Holland. They stopped at Antwerp, and went together

A PORTRAIT (MAUD)

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

to an International Exhibition there. Whistler said to us once that he could be never ill-natured, only wicked. This was one of the occasions when he was "wicked." In the gallery, he refused to look at any pictures except those that told stories, annoying Chase by asking if the cat would really catch the mouse and the baby swallow the mustard-pot. The first serious interest he showed was in the work of Alfred Stevens. Before it he stood for long, at last, his long expressive forefinger pointing to one passage in the small canvas: "H'm, Colonel! you know one would not mind having painted that!" Chase grew nervous as they approached the wall devoted to Bastien-Lepage, whom he admired, and he decided to leave Whistler. But Whistler would not hear of it. "I'll only say one word, Chase," he promised. Then they came to the Bastiens: "H'm, h'm, Colonel, the one word—School!" Chase goes on to tell of the further journey to Amsterdam. Two Germans were in the railway carriage with them. "Well, you know, Colonel, if the Almighty ever made a mistake, it was when he created the German!" Whistler said at the end of a few minutes. Chase told him that if he could speak German, he might understand their interesting talk. Whistler answered in fluent German and talked nothing else, until, at Haarlem, Chase could endure it no longer and left the train. Whistler leaned out of the window as the train started: "Think it over, Chase, and to-morrow morning you will come on to Amsterdam, and you'll tell me that I'm right —about the German!"

All this is amusing and characteristic of Whistler in certain moods, but from Mr. Chase it would be interesting to hear less of Whistler at play and more of him at work. He gives only now and then a glimpse of Whistler the artist, whom, even then, he shows in lighter mood. He tells of one occasion when an American friend wanted to buy some etchings,

and they were to lunch with him in the City to arrange the matter. Taking a hansom, late already for the appointment, they passed a greengrocer's, where Whistler stopped the driver: "Well, Chase, what do you think? If I get him to move the box of oranges? What?" And Chase says he set to work, and the man in the City had to wait until the sketch was done. On another occasion, Chase expressed surprise at Whistler's refusing to deliver at once a picture to the lady who had bought it and claimed it. But Whistler explained:

> "You know, Chase, the people don't really want anything beautiful. They fill a room by chance with beautiful things, and some little trumpery something over the mantelpiece gives the whole damned show away. And if they pay a hundred pounds or so for a picture, they think it belongs to them. Well—why—it should only be theirs for a while—hung on their walls that they may rejoice in it, and then returned."

It must be admitted that it is not easy, from any standpoint, to write of Whistler during the years that followed his return from Venice. The decade between 1880 and 1890 is the fullest of Whistler's always full life. It was during these ten years that he opened his "one man" shows amidst jeers, and closed them with success. It was during these ten years that he conquered society, though society never realised it. It was during these ten years that, to make himself known, he became in the streets of London the observed of all observers, developing extraordinary costumes, attracting to himself the attention he wanted to attract. It was during these ten years that he began to wrap himself in mystery, as Degas said of him—and then go off and get photographed, when, as Degas also said, he acted as if he had no genius; all of which was merely part of the armour he put on to protect himself from, and draw to himself, a foolish public. It was during these ten years that he

invented the Followers—and got rid of them; that he flitted from house to house, from studio to studio, and through England, France, Belgium and Holland, until it is almost impossible to keep pace with him; that he captured the press, though it is still unconscious of its capture; that he concentrated the interest of England, of the whole world, upon him, with one object in view—that is, to make England, to make the whole world, look at his work.

In these crowded years, two events stand out with special prominence—his *Ten o'Clock* and his invasion of the British Artists. One states definitely his views on the subject of art; the other shows as definitely the position to which, through his art, he had attained in the eyes of artists. Each, therefore, must be written of separately.

CHAPTER XXVIII. THE "TEN O'CLOCK." THE YEARS EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-FOUR TO EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-EIGHT

THE *Ten o'Clock* was Whistler's second serious experiment as a writer. He put into it all he knew of his art, and of the laws governing it, which he believed to be unalterable and everlasting. Mr. W. C. Alexander has told us that, when he listened to the *Ten o'Clock* at Prince's Hall, there was nothing in it fresh to him; he had heard it all for years from Whistler. The only new thing was Whistler's decision to say in public what he had long said in private. He was busy with this work throughout the autumn and early winter of 1884–85. Friends who saw him then share memories of the same unceasing care he gave to his writing as to his painting. He would appear at all sorts of strange hours, up to midnight, with a page or two to submit to Mr. Alan S. Cole, in whose diary, from early October until February, note follows note of visits from Whistler or evenings spent helping him:

October 24th (1884): "Whistler to dine. We passed the evening writing out his views on Ruskin, Art, &c.

October 27th: "Jimmy to dinner, continuing notes as to himself, and Art.

October 28th: "Writing out Whistler's notes for him.

October 29th: "Jimmy to dine. Writing notes as to his opinions on Art matters, and discussing whether to offer them for publication to *English Illustrated Magazine* edited by Comyns Carr, or to whom?"

Mr. G. A. Holmes, in his Chelsea house, was constantly roused by the well-known sharp ring and quick double knock, followed by Whistler with a new page or paragraph for his approval. Mr. Menpes writes that "scores of times —I might almost say hundreds of times—he paced up and down the Embankment at night, repeating to me sentences from the marvellous lecture." During a few days' illness which kept Whistler at his brother's house in Wimpole Street, where, when ill, he always went to be taken care of, Mrs. Whistler recalls him sitting, propped up by pillows, while he wrote and read new passages to the doctor and herself.

His original plan for an article in the *English Illustrated*, then in the first days of brilliant promise, never came to anything. In November 1884, Lord Powerscourt, Mr. Ludovici says in the *Art Journal* (July 1906), invited Whistler to Ireland to distribute prizes at an art school and to speak to the students, and nothing seemed more appropriate for the purpose than the notes he had written. On November 19 (1884), Mr. Cole recorded:

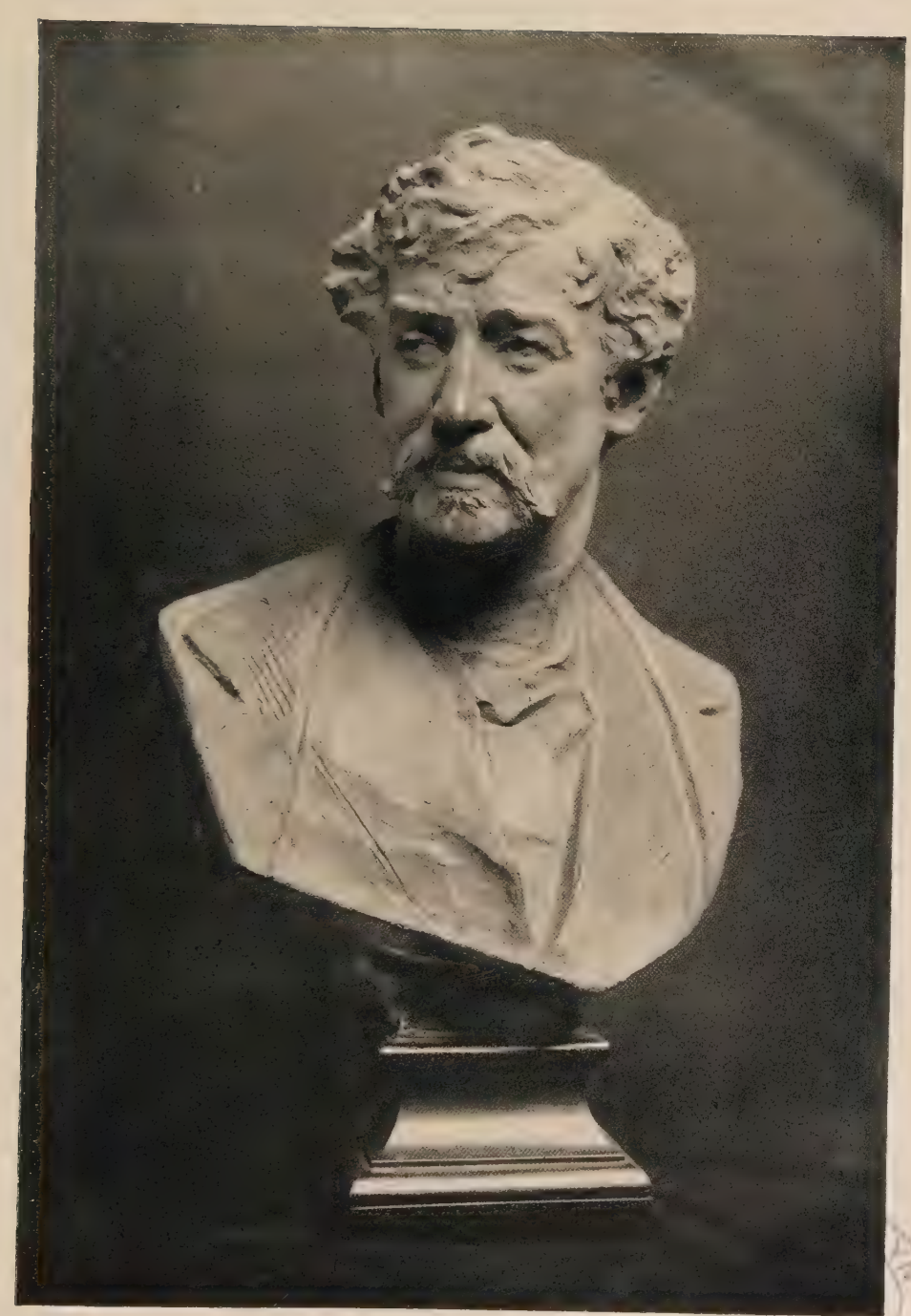
> "Whistler called and told us how he was invited to Ireland, where he was sending some of his works, and would lecture in Dublin."

The invitation came from the Dublin Sketching Club. Mr. Booth Pearsall writes us of his kindness in accepting the invitation, and of the interest of the exhibition which was held at Leinster Hall, three other Americans—Sargent, Julian Story and Ralph Curtis—being represented with him. No such large and fine collection of Whistlers had hitherto been seen anywhere out of London, a fact which alone made this show memorable. We quote Mr. Pearsall:

> "His letters show how exceedingly generous he was to a club of strangers by lending them twenty-five of his works. This collection included the *Portrait of My Mother*, *Lady Meux*, and

Carlyle, and a number of Nocturnes, and other bits in oil, water-colour and pastel. The pictures had to be hung together in a group. As I was so interested in them, with Mr. Whistler's permission, I had them photographed. He never asked for rights or commission, but, in the most gracious, generous way, gave us the permission to use the negatives as we liked. The exhibition was hardly open, before the critical music began, and, in the papers and in conversation, a regular tempest arose, that was highly diverting to Mr. Whistler. He begged me to send him everything said about the exhibition, good, bad and indifferent, and his letters show he quite enjoyed all the heat and ferment. The whole of Dublin was convulsed, and many went to Molesworth Street to see the exhibition who rarely went to see anything of the kind. Then a terrible convulsion took place in the club: a group of members we had admitted, who photographed, got together, and drew up resolutions, that never again should such pictures be exhibited. None of these men could even paint. The talent of the club replied by having Mr. Whistler elected as Hon. Member, and it was carried, despite intense resistance. I took an active part in all this. It was with a view to helping Mr. Whistler that I did my best to have his famous *Ten o'Clock* given in Dublin. He was at first disposed to come over, but other matters prevented him, and the matter dropped. During the time of the exhibition, I tried my utmost to sell the pictures, and an offer was made by a friend to purchase *The Mother* and the *Carlyle*, which seemed to promise well, but ultimately stopped. I did induce the friend to purchase *Piccadilly*, which had been No. 9, *Nocturne in Grey and Gold—Piccadilly* (water colour), in his exhibition in Bond Street that May (Dowdeswell's). He was very much pleased, indeed, and sent the owner, the Right Hon. Jonathan Hogg, P.C., a receipt, greatly to Mr. Hogg's amusement, for an impression was rife amongst the public, that he never did attend to business matters. I know from personal friends, who knew Mr. Whistler then, how much pleased he was, not only with the purchase of his pictures, but with the commotion that exhibition caused."

Whistler did not give up the idea of a lecture. Archibald Forbes heard him read his essay, was impressed, and introduced him to Mrs. D'Oyly Carte. She had managed a lecture tour for Forbes, and now she agreed to arrange one



JAMES McNEILL WHISTLER

(From a bust by Sir J. E. Boehm)

evening for Whistler. She has told us of his fastidious attention to the details. "The idea was absolutely his," she writes us, "and all I did was to see to the business arrangements. Knowing him, you can imagine how enthusiastic he was over it all, and how he made one enthusiastic too." She was just about to produce *The Mikado*, and, sure that he would find her in her office at the Savoy Theatre, he would appear there every evening to talk things over, or would send Mr. Walter Sickert with a message. Whistler delighted in her office, a tiny room lit by one lamp on her desk, with strange effects of light and shadow, but the only record that remains in his work of his many visits is in the two etchings, *Savoy Scaffolding* and *Miss Lenoir*, Mrs. D'Oyly Carte's name before her marriage. Prince's Hall was taken for the lecture. Whistler suggested the hour. People were not to rush to him from the dinner-table as to the theatre, therefore ten was as early as one could expect them to be punctual, and the hour gave the name: the *Ten o'Clock*. He designed the ticket, he had it enlarged into a poster, he chose the offices and galleries where tickets should be sold. There was a rehearsal at Prince's Hall on February 19 (1885), Mrs. D'Oyly Carte sitting in front to tell him if his voice carried. Whistler had his lecture by heart, his delivery was excellent, he needed no coaching, only an occasional warning to raise his voice. It was because he feared his voice would not carry that he gave his nightly rehearsals on the Embankment, so Mr. Menpes says.

On the night itself, February 20, 1885, the hall was crowded. Mrs. D'Oyly Carte wondered why so many people came, certain that nothing less was expected than the seriousness of the lecturer and his lecture. The reporters admitted afterwards that they asked each other whether "the eccentric artist was going to sketch, to pose, to sing, or to rhapsodise?" A writer in the *Daily Telegraph* confessed that he thought

"anything might be expected—a burlesque, a breakdown, or a comic dance," and was therefore frankly surprised when the "amiable eccentric, tacitly allowed to anticipate even the first of April," chose to appear simply as "a jaunty, unabashed, composed, and self-satisfied gentleman, armed with an opera hat and an eyeglass." Others were so amazed to see him "attired in faultless evening dress" that they had to note the fact in their report. Followers compared the small figure in black against the shadowy background to one of his own arrangements. Friends have said that he looked like his own portrait of *Sarasate* on the concert platform, and they recall the hat carefully placed on the table and the long cane against the wall behind him. Oscar Wilde's description was, "a miniature Mephistopheles mocking the majority." The unprejudiced saw the dignity of his presence and the simplicity of his manner; all were compelled to feel the beauty and earnestness of his words. Mrs. Anna Lea Merritt writes us:

> "It is always a delight to remember that actually once Mr. Whistler was really shy! Those who had the pleasure of hearing his first *Ten o'Clock* must remember that when he came before his rather puzzled and distinguished audience, there were a few minutes of very palpable stage fright."

He had notes, but he seldom referred to them. He held the audience from the first, and Mrs. D'Oyly Carte remembers the hush in the hall when he came to his description of London transfigured, a fairyland in the night. "I went to laugh and I stayed to praise," is Mr. Lewis F. Day's account to us, and others were generous enough to make the same admission.

Whistler forced his audience to listen to him because he spoke with conviction. The *Ten o'Clock* was the statement of simple truths which his contemporaries were doing their best to forget. When we read it to-day, our surprise

is that things so obvious needed saying even while we are thankful that the need existed, since to this need we owe one of the most interesting professions of artistic faith ever made by an artist. The lecture was given in the 'eighties when "art" had been driven to such a height of popularity that it ran the risk of disappearing in the fads and follies and excesses of those who had helped to popularise it. The reaction against the paltry anecdote and sentiment of early Victorian art had been extreme. Ruskin, through his books, the Pre-Raphaelites Holman Hunt and Millais, through their pictures, had spread the doctrine that art was a question of ethics and industry. Rossetti and writers like Pater would have had the world believe that it belonged to the past and that men must grope their way back through the centuries to resurrect it. William Morris and his school taught that it sprang from the people and to the people must be returned before there could be hope for it. Men and women clad themselves in strange, sad-coloured garments and called themselves "æsthetes"; many, besides Oscar Wilde, "peddled" art in the provinces; artists preached its political importance; parsons discovered in it a new means to salvation. Art was, indeed, upon the town, as Whistler said, but ethics and æstheticism, fashion and socialism, had captured it. His lecture was a protest against all these absurdities committed in the name of art, against the prevailing belief that art belonged to the past, that it should be the affair of the multitude, that its business was to teach or to elevate. "Art and Joy go together," he said, and the world's masters were never reformers, never missionaries, but, content with their surroundings, found beauty everywhere. There was no great past, no mean present, for art, no drawing of lines between the marbles of the Greek and the fans and broideries of Japan. There was no artistic period, no art-loving people.

Art happened, and, in a few eloquent words, he gave the history of its happening and the coming of the cheap and tawdry, when the taste of the tradesman supplanted the science of the artist, and the multitude rejoiced. Art, he held, is a science—the science by which the artist picks and chooses and groups the elements contained in Nature, that beauty may be the result. For "Nature is very rarely right, to such an extent even, that it might almost be said that Nature is usually wrong." He has been so frequently misunderstood that it may be well to emphasise the meaning of these two assertions upon which his belief was based. Art happens, because the artist, like the scientist, may appear anywhere or at any time; art is a science not because, as some painters imagine, it is concerned with laws of light or chemistry of colours or scientific problems in the usual sense, but because it is as exact in its methods and in its results as the science of chemistry or any other. The artist can leave no more to chance than the chemist or the botanist or the biologist. Knowledge may and does increase and develop, but the laws of art are as invariable as those of chemistry, botany, or biology. Because art is a science, the critic who is not an artist speaks without authority and would prize a picture as a "hieroglyph or symbol of story," or for anything save the painter's poetry, which is the sole reason for its existence: "the amazing invention that shall have put form and colour into such perfect harmony, that exquisiteness is the result." The conditions of art are degraded by these "middlemen," and no less by the foolish who would go back because the thumb of the mountebank jerked the other way. He laughed at the pretence of the State as fosterer of art—art that roams as she will, from the builders of the Parthenon to the opium-eaters of Nankin, from the Master at Madrid to Hokusai at the foot of Fusiyama. It is said by some that Whistler's philosophy was thin: his statement that such a

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thing as an artistic period has never been known is dismissed by others as a boyish utterance. But it is the very simplicity of the truth taught by Whistler that is mistaken for thinness to-day, when the necessity of the teaching is not so evident. It is forgotten that his denial of an artistic period or an art-loving people was in his defence of art against those who would have bound it by dates and confined it within geographical limits. He meant, not that a certain period might not produce more artists and more people to appreciate them than another, but that art is independent of time and place:

> "seeking and finding the beautiful in all conditions and in all times, as did her high priest, Rembrandt, when he saw picturesque grandeur and noble dignity in the Jews' quarter of Amsterdam, and lamented not that its inhabitants were not Greeks.
>
> "As did Tintoret and Paul Veronese, among the Venetians, while not halting to change the brocaded silks for the classic draperies of Athens.
>
> "As did, at the Court of Philip, Velasquez, whose Infantas, clad in inæsthetic hoops, are, as works of Art, of the same quality as the Elgin marbles."

He might have added, as did Whistler, whose Thames, flowing through London, is lovelier far than the rivers of any imaginary Garden of Eden, and whose men and women are as stately as the Venetian's or the Spaniard's, though clothed in the fashions the day decreed.

His argument was clear and logical, and his facts, revolutionary then, are becoming the truisms of a later generation. Critics, photographers, even Royal Academicians have appropriated and made use of many of the ideas of the *Ten o'Clock*, for strange things are happening to the memory of the Idle Apprentice.

Whistler, as a lecturer, made his points wittily; he chose his words and rounded his sentences with the same feeling for the beautiful that ruled his painting. The *Ten o'Clock*

has passed into literature. Those Sunday wrestlings with Scripture in Lowell, that getting of the Psalms by heart at Stonington, had helped him to develop a style the literary man by profession may well envy. This style in *Art and Art Critics* had its roughnesses. He pruned and chastened it in his letters to the papers, devoting infinite thought and trouble to the slightest, for he, more than most men, believed that whatever he had to do was worth doing with all his might. Even in his private correspondence he was as scrupulous, and we have known him go so far as to make a rough draft of a letter to his bootmaker in Paris, and ask us to dictate it to him while he wrote his fair copy, as a final touch addressing it to M. ——, *Maître Bottier*. In the *Ten o'Clock*, as a result of so much practice, he brought his style to perfection. Many things he said concerned passing fads and fancies, but his philosophy was based on the eternal truths of art and expressed with the beauty that endures for all time.

The critics treated the lecture as they treated his exhibitions. The *Daily News* was almost alone in owning honestly that the quality of the lecture was a surprise. The *Times* had the majority with it, when it said that the audience, hoping for an hour's amusement from " the eccentric genius of the artist," were not disappointed. " The eccentric freak of an amiable, humorous, and accomplished gentleman," was the *Daily Telegraph's* opinion. Oscar Wilde, in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, was shocked that a mere artist should speak on art, and was unwilling to accept the dictum that only a painter is a judge of painting. This was natural, for it was as an authority on art that Wilde had made himself known in the beginning. Nor could he assent to much that Whistler said, for, as a lecturer, he had been something of a perambulating advertisement for the " æsthetic movement," against which the *Ten o'Clock* was a protest. But he was

more generous than other critics in acknowledging the beauty of the lecture and the earnestness of the lecturer, though he could not finish his notice in the *Pall Mall* without one parting shot at the man whose target he had so often been: "that he is indeed one of the very greatest masters of painting is my opinion. And I may add that, in this opinion, Mr. Whistler himself entirely concurs." This was not the sort of thing Whistler could pass in silence. His answer led to a correspondence which made still another chapter in *The Gentle Art*, where it may be read in full.

Whistler repeated the *Ten o'Clock* several times—first early in March, before the British Artists, and later in the same month (the 24th) before the University Art Society at Cambridge, where he spent the night with Mr. Sidney Colvin, who writes us:

> "beyond the mere fact that Whistler dined with me in hall and had some chat there with Prince Edward—an amiable youth, who was a little scared at the idea of having to talk art (of which he was blankly ignorant), but whom Whistler soon put at his ease—I have no precise recollection of what passed."

On April 30, he gave his lecture at Oxford. Mr. Sidney Starr says:

> "I went down with Whistler and his brother, 'Doctor Willie,' to put up at the historic 'Mitre.' The lecture hall was small, with primitive benches, and the audience was small in comparison with that of London. The lecture was delivered impressively, but lacking the original emphasis and sparkle. Whistler hated to do anything twice over, and this was the fourth time."

The fifth time was about the same date at the Royal Academy Students' Club in Golden Square, a curiously unexplained accident, and a sixth at the Fine Art Society's. Dr. Moncure Conway wrote us, a year before his death, that he heard the *Ten o'Clock* at Lady Jeune's. There was a suggestion, which came to nothing, of taking it on an American

tour and to Paris. It was heard twice more in London, once at the Grosvenor Gallery in February 1888. Val Prinsep remembers Whistler's pressing invitation for him and Leighton to attend :

> " During the time he was President of the British Artists, he and the other heads of art sometimes were asked to dine by our President (Sir F. Leighton). (' Rather late to ask *me*, don't you think ? ' Whistler is said to have remarked.) After dinner, he pressed Leighton and me to come to his lecture, *Ten o'Clock*, which was to be delivered a few days after.—' What's the use of me coming ? ' Leighton said sadly. ' You know I should not argee with what you said, my dear Whistler ? '—' Oh,' cried Whistler, ' come all the same ; nobody takes me seriously, don't you know ! ' "

It was heard, for the last time, three years later (1891), at the Chelsea Arts Club which, just started, proposed to hold meetings for lectures and discussions, and Whistler was asked to inaugurate them with his *Ten o'Clock*. When, before the club found a home, it was suggested that the first of these meetings should be at the Cadogan Pier Hotel, Whistler's answer was characteristic : " No, gentlemen, let us go to no *beer hotel*," and the *Ten o'Clock* was put off until the club house in the King's Road was ready.

The *Ten o'Clock* was published by Messrs. Chatto and Windus in the spring of 1888, three years after its first delivery. It received much the same criticism when it appeared as a pamphlet as when it was delivered as a lecture. But the only criticism Whistler took seriously was an article by Mr. Swinburne in the *Fortnightly Review* for June 1888.

Swinburne objected to Whistler's praise of Japanese art, to the rigid line he drew between art and literature, to his incursion as " brilliant amateur " into the region of letters, to his denial of the possibility of an artistic period or an

art-loving people, and to much else besides. All this might have passed, and the friendship between Whistler and Swinburne have been undisturbed. But Swinburne went further. He questioned the seriousness of Whistler. He thought it would be certainly indecorous, and possibly superfluous, to inquire of Whistler, "How far the witty tongue may be thrust into the smiling cheek?" Swinburne hinted, if he did not say positively, that Whistler was "a jester of genius" in the *Ten o'Clock*—a "tumbler or a clown." Whistler was jealous of the dignity of art and of himself as artist, and was disappointed to find that Swinburne "also misunderstood." The most dignified, almost pathetic, pages in *The Gentle Art* are those where he answers the article—*Et tu, Brute*—asking Swinburne:

> "Who are you, deserting your Muse, that you should insult my Goddess with familiarity, and the manners of approach common to the reasoners in the market-place?"

This was followed by a letter, printed in the *World* under the heading *Freeing a Last Friend,* in which Whistler stated that he had "lost a *confrère*; but, then, I have gained an acquaintance—one Algernon Swinburne."

The letter was sent to Mr. Swinburne before it appeared in the *World.* We have been told that it was received at Putney one Sunday morning when Mr. Watts-Dunton was to breakfast with Whistler. Suspecting that the letter might not be friendly, Mr. Watts-Dunton took it, unopened, with him to Chelsea and begged Whistler to withdraw it. Whistler refused. Mr. Watts-Dunton left the house without breakfasting, and the same day the letter was delivered to Swinburne, who after reading it, pale with rage, swore that never again would he speak to Whistler. He never did. Mr. Watts-Dunton, we believe, was, as a result, at pains to avoid Whistler, fearful of an open rupture with him. Mr.

Meredith had discovered years before that the springs in Whistler were prompt for the challenge, and it cannot be denied that he had some reason for seeing a challenge in Swinburne's article. He was stung to the quick, but even in his anger he could not forget the friendship of the past. In all its bitterness he was yet full of affection and admiration for the poet who had "descended into the market-place." There is one sentence in his answer that alone would explain and justify his attitude:

> "Do we not speak the same language? Are we strangers, then, or, in our Father's house are there so many mansions that you lose your way, my brother, and cannot recognise your kin?"

CHELSEA WHARF
(*Grey and Silver*)

CHAPTER XXIX. THE BRITISH ARTISTS —THE RISE. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-FOUR TO EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-SIX

IN the autumn of 1884, Whistler joined the Society of British Artists. Years later, once, when a British Artist was dining with us, Whistler came in. "A delightful evening," he said, towards midnight, the British Artist having gone, "but what was it for the British Artist sitting there, face to face with his late President?" And then, he told us how he first became connected with the Society:

> "Well, you know, one day at my studio in Chelsea, a deputation arrived—Ayerst Ingram and one or two others.—And there they were—and I received them charmingly, of course—and they represented to me that the British Artists' was an old and distinguished Society, possibly as old as the Academy, and maybe older, and they had come to ask me if I would do them the honour of becoming a member. It was only right I should know that the Society's fortunes were at a low ebb, but they wished to put new life into it. I felt the ceremony of the occasion. Whatever the Society was at the moment, it had a past, and they were there with all official authority to pay me a compliment. I accepted the offer with appropriate courtesy. As always, I understood the ceremonial of the occasion—and then, almost as soon as I was made a member, I was elected President."

In the summer of 1906, Mr. Alfred East, President of the British Artists, and the Council, with the courtesy Whistler would have approved, gave us permission to consult the Minute Books. The first mention of Whistler is in the Minutes

of the half-yearly General Meeting, November 21, 1884, held at the Suffolk Street Galleries. Among those present were Ayerst Ingram, Yeend King, David Law, Jacomb-Hood, H. H. Cauty, the two Ludovicis—father and son—Bernard Evans, Arthur Hill, and Wyke Bayliss. It was proposed by Mr. Hill, seconded by Mr. Ingram,

> "that Mr. Whistler be invited to join the Society as a member. A discussion took place concerning the law of electing Mr. Whistler by Ballot, when it was proposed by Mr. Bayliss, seconded by Mr. Cauty, that the law relating to the election of members be suspended."

This was carried, and, the *Times* said (December 3, 1884), "Artistic society was startled by the news that this most wayward, most un-English of painters had found a home among the men of Suffolk Street—of all people in the world."

Whistler had never before belonged to any society of artists in England, and had never been asked to belong to one. He was now fifty, an age when most men have "arrived" officially, if they are to "arrive" at all. The reason why the British Artists, at so late a date, thought it to their advantage to invite him, and why their action startled the world, will be better understood when his position as an artist and his relations to his contemporaries are remembered. Up to this moment he had stood alone, apart from every school and group and movement in the country which he had made his home. He was as complete a foreigner in England as when he came, a quarter of a century before, fresh from the studios of Paris. As a man, he was still a puzzle to the people among whom he lived, more American or French than English in his appearance, his manners, and his standards. His short, slight figure, his dark colouring, his abundant curls, his vivacity of gesture, his American accent, his gaiety, his sense of honour, his quick resentment of an insult, were all foreign, and therefore to be suspected,

and his personality increased the suspicion with which his art was regarded. It was as foreign, as "un-English," and he was found no less disquieting as an artist than as a man. Recent critics have separated in his work the several tendencies they have discovered there, and pointed out where it is American, where French, where Japanese. But to his contemporaries it did not matter what these tendencies were, since the result was something that was not English. His art, in its aims and methods, was so entirely distinct from theirs that to them he seemed in deliberate and ill-regulated opposition, ruled by caprice and straining after novelty.

When Whistler came to England, English art was almost exclusively embodied in the Academy which had grown stronger with every year and was never so powerful as in the 'seventies and 'eighties, though then the fine traditions of English art had been forgotten and the painter's problems neglected. The artist was absorbed in anecdote, in history, in that artificial composition, constructed out of the things he did not know and could never see for himself, against which the young Frenchmen, with whom Whistler studied in the 'fifties, had been most strenuously in revolt. Wilkie set the ideal for the nineteenth-century Academician when he said that "to know the taste of the public—to learn what will best please the employer—is to an artist the most valuable of all knowledge." It was a knowledge assiduously cultivated and with remarkable success. The classical inventions of Leighton, Tadema, and Poynter appealed to the scholar; the idyls of Millais, Marcus Stone and Leslie to the sentimentalist. Watts preached sermons for the serious, Stacy Marks raised a laugh in the humourist, Herbert and Long edified the pious. Every taste was catered to. Everybody could understand, and, as a consequence, art had never been so popular in England. The Academy

became a social force. As art was the last thing looked for in the picture of the Academician, so the artist was the last thing looked for in the Academician. The situation is summed up in Whistler's reply to a group of ladies who were praising Leighton :

> " He is such a wonderful musician !—such a gallant colonel !—such a brilliant orator !—such a dignified President !—such a charming host !—such an amazing linguist ! "—" H'm, paints, too, don't he, among his other accomplishments ? "

It was an extraordinary state of affairs. " Art " was little more than an excuse for all sorts of social trivialities. The men who were thought daring in rebellion and leaders of a secession did little to improve matters. The Pre-Raphaelites and their followers were as absorbed in subject, though they paid greater attention to the treatment of it, and preached, as almost all reformers always have, a return to Nature. But their attempts at reform in technique retarded rather than helped development in the right direction. Their insistence upon detail and " finish " did not open the painter's eyes to the truths and beauties of Nature, but closed them more hopelessly than ever by making it a matter of duty with him to see nothing but subordinate, often unimportant, facts, and to copy them with the fidelity of a machine. The rare exception, like Alfred Stevens, who neither stooped to consider the taste of public and employer nor forgot the artist in the missionary, was as complete a pariah as Whistler.

The position in France was different. There, too, was a strong, powerful, academic body, but French officialism respected tradition. The art of the academic painters might be frigid, conventional and dull, but it was never petty and trivial, never strove to please by escape from the obligations and restrictions of drawing and paint. Gleyre, Ary Scheffer, Couture were the masters Whistler found

in Paris. Their successors—men like Gérôme, Jean-Paul, Laurens, Bouguereau, Bonnat—did not altogether throw their dignity as artists to the winds of popularity, or sacrifice it to social ambition. The rebels in France were not actuated by moral or literary motives, but broke away from convention as painters. Rebellion sent Holman Hunt to Palestine, Rossetti to mediævalism, Burne-Jones to legend and allegory; it kept Courbet at home, for the true was the beautiful, and truth was to be had in the life and the people the painter knew as well as in strange lands and outlived centuries. Moreover, the painter was to see all these things, not as through a microscope, but as the human eye was made to see them. No man who looks out upon a broad landscape can count the blades of grass in a field or the leaves of ivy on a wall; the eye can take it in only as a whole, enveloped in atmosphere, bathed in light, all objects in it keeping their places in their respective planes. While, in England, the artist was searching the Scriptures, the classics and history for subject, and always for subject, in France he was training his eyes to see things as they are and his hand to render them in their proper relations, that is, with their proper values. This pre-occupation with the aspect of Nature, and the study of values, gave them new pictorial and technical problems to solve, and subject counted for nothing, except as an aid to their right solution. It is curious to contrast the work of the men in France and England who were of the same generation as Whistler. The young Fantin-Latour grouped his friends about the portrait of the master dead but yesterday, while the young Leighton was re-arranging a procession of early Florentines to carry anew the Madonna of Cimabue through their streets. Manet noted the play of light and colour in the bull-rings of Spain, while Tadema rebuilt on his canvas the arenas of ancient Rome. Degas chose his models among the washerwomen

and ballet-girls of modern Paris, while Rossetti borrowed his from Dante.

Whistler, from his very first picture, was as pre-occupied with the beauty in the "familiar" as his French fellow students. What might have happened had he remained in France—whether he would have developed into another Fantin, another Manet, another Degas—it is idle to discuss. Coming to England, he developed in his own way, and this was a way with which English painters had no sympathy whatever. He was so isolated, so apart, in his work, that nothing has been more difficult for the historian of modern art than to place, to classify, him. Some authorities have included him among the Realists. His work eventually differed from that of Courbet and Courbet's disciples, but he was always as much a realist as they in his preference for the world in which he lived, and in his study of the relations to each other—the values—of the things he found in it. He never wavered, except when he painted the Japanese pictures as we have pointed out, and even then he was not led astray by anecdote, or sentiment, but by the beauty that had drifted from Japan into his house and studio. London, foggy, dirty, gloomy, despised by most artists, with its little shops and taverns in the fog-bound streets; the Thames, with its ugly warehouses and gaunt factories in the mist-laden night; the crinolines of the 'sixties; the clinging, tight draperies of the 'seventies,—became beautiful as he saw them. He made no effort to reform, to improve upon Nature, only reserving for himself his right to select the elements in it that were beautiful and could be brought together, as the notes in music, to create harmony—in his practice carrying out his teaching of the *Ten o'Clock*. He sought colour and form in nature, not infinitesimal detail. The Pre-Raphaelites wanted to leave out as little as a camera omits, he wanted to put in no more than comes within the

THE BALCONY

(*Harmony in Flesh Colour and Green*)

painter's vision. He turned his back on the history and archæology in favour at the Academy, filling his canvas with no meaning except whatever there may be in the beauty of rhythm and design. And all the time he struggled to perfect his technical methods, to make of them a perfect medium by which to express this beauty, to reconcile what he could see in Nature with what his brush could render. The Pre-Raphaelites laboured over their canvas, inch by inch; he painted his whole picture at once that unity might be the result. The Academicians lost their way in literary labyrinths; he lingered on the river, getting by heart the secret of its charm, he watched the movement, the pose, of the men and women around him. The modern exhibition forced most painters into violent colour and exaggerated action as their one chance of attracting attention; he made no concession but kept on painting for himself, though he was ready to submit his pictures when they were finished to the same test as others.

It was inevitable that his English contemporaries could make nothing of him and eyed his work with doubt and mistrust. The Academician saw nothing at all in his pictures. To the Pre-Raphaelite they were slovenly and superficial. Holman Hunt said of him that he knew where to leave off and was careful in the avoidance of difficulties; Millais thought him "a great power of mischief among young men," "a man who had never learnt the grammar of his art." The critics took their cue from the painters, the more willingly because art criticism then meant the elaborate analysis of the subject of a picture, and, judged by the prevailing standpoint, there was no subject in Whistler's pictures to analyse. The public, in the public's usual fashion, followed like sheep, convinced that his work was empty, slight, trivial, an insult to their intelligence, unless they took it as a jest. "Eccentric" still was the usual adjective

to apply to him, and nothing explains the popular conception of him better than the readiness to see eccentricity even in those methods which he, " heir to all the ages," had inherited from other masters. Thus, his long-handled brushes and his manner of placing sitter and canvas when he painted a portrait were eccentric, though they had been Gainsborough's a century before. Again, to say that a picture was finished from the beginning was no less eccentric, though it was one of Baudelaire's favourite axioms that the author already foresees the last line of his work when he writes the first. It is easier to make than to lose the reputation for eccentricity, which is fatal to success in a land of convention. Whistler saw the Englishmen, who had studied in Paris at the same time with him, laden with honours—Poynter, a distinguished member of the Academy and Leighton its President, Du Maurier the favoured contributor to *Punch*, Armstrong an important official at South Kensington—when he was still, officially, on the outside—at fifty less honoured than at twenty-five, because now it was said that he had not realised the promise of his youth.

In one respect, however, his position had changed with time—his position among the young. His contemporaries did not alter their opinion of him, but the new generation of artists, grown up in the meanwhile and now " arriving," turned to him as unmistakably as the older men held aloof. Though doubted and mistrusted, he had never been quite without influence. To look over old reviews and notices of exhibitions is to find, long before the 'eighties, frequent references to the effect of his example upon other artists. During the 'eighties, in the *Art Journal* (June 1887), Sir Walter Armstrong traced the growing influence of French on English art to the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1867 and to Whistler. But the artists of the new generation went much further than the admission of his influence ; with the

enthusiasm of youth, they proclaimed Whistler's greatness from the house-tops. He was not only an influence, he was their master—the one master in England. After his return from Venice, when his fortunes were at their lowest ebb and the public held him in most contempt, this enthusiasm began to make itself heard and felt in the studios and the schools.

It was the moment also when the fortunes of the British Artists were at lowest ebb, and heroic measures were needed to mend them. The Society, as Whistler said, was old, with distinguished chapters in its history. It was formed by one of the first groups who realised the necessity of an association of their own in self-defence against the monopoly of the Academy. It dated back to the beginning of the nineteenth century. With the old Water Colour Society, it was held by the public only second in rank to the Academy. Its gallery was in Suffolk Street, near enough to the Academy to profit by any overflow of visitors, until the Academy moved from Trafalgar Square to Piccadilly. The old Water-colour Society was more independent, because it devoted itself to a branch of art never in high Academical favour. But the British Artists suffered from this removal, and also from the formation of new associations that gave prominence to oil painting, and eventually it found a formidable rival in the Grosvenor Gallery, backed by money, with the attraction of novelty and the advertisement of notoriety. Uncertain of their future, they were forced to desperate remedies. In Whistler, with his enthusiastic following among the young and rising, they seemed to see just the man to drag them from the pit of obscurity and impotence into which they were sinking. The older members hesitated—afraid of Whistler, afraid of the Academy, afraid of themselves. But the younger members carried the day.

Whistler accepted their advances, strange as it struck

people at the time, because he always wished for, and appreciated, official honours and recognition. It was the first formal compliment from any body of his fellow craftsmen, and he was gratified by it, realising also that his identification with a society of respectable age and standing would most certainly influence public opinion concerning himself. Whistler's acceptance of the honour was not an empty form. He worked hard for the Society from his election as a member to his resignation as President. He attended his first meeting on December 1, 1884, and interested himself immediately in the affairs of the Society, though, according to Mr. Ludovici, this was the last thing the Society expected of him. He promptly invited his President and fellow members to breakfast in Tite Street, and, as promptly, was put on a committee for a smoking concert, or *conversazione*. He at once sent to the Winter Exhibition (1884–85) two pictures—*Arrangement in Black, No. II.*, the portrait of Mrs. Louis Huth, not exhibited in London since 1874, and a water-colour, *A Little Red Note, Dordrecht*, and for the Summer Exhibition (1885) he kept his latest work, the *Sarasate*, never exhibited before. Mr. Cole, seeing the portrait in the studio the preceding October, wrote in his diary :

> "*October 19th* (1884): M. and I went to tea with Whistler to see his fine full-length of Sarasate, the violinist, for next year's Academy."

But, whatever his original intention may have been, the *Sarasate* went to the British Artists, with several small delicate Notes and Harmonies. If, in electing him, the British Artists hoped to attract attention to their exhibition, they were not disappointed. "The eccentric Mr. Whistler has gone to a neglected little gallery, the British Artists, which he will probably bring into fashion," Mr. Claude Phillips wrote in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* (July 1885), and this is

precisely what happened. The distinction of the *Sarasate* could not be denied. But in his other work he was pronounced "vastly amusing"; the *Pall Mall Gazette* seized this occasion to remind him of "Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes' virtuous determination never to be as funny as he could. It is so bad for the young."

At a meeting on June 1 (1885), Whistler proposed that Sunday receptions should be given in the gallery, and he was put on the committee with Mr. John Burr, the President, and Mr. G. A. Holmes. He seconded Mr. Ingram's resolution that the Society should award two medals, one for figure, the other for landscape. He took part in the election of Mr. Mortimer Menpes as "a member for water-colour," showing that water-colour was regarded as a separate art, and members might be elected as water-colour painters without being members for other mediums—a division into distinct sections that he carried out in the International Society, as he did also the suggestion now made that photographs of members' pictures should be sold in the gallery. For the Winter Exhibition of 1885–86 he had another interesting group, including the *Portrait of Mrs. Cassatt* and the *Note in Green and Violet*, a small pastel of a nude which created the most unexpected sensation. About a month before the show opened, J. C. Horsley, R.A., had read during a Church Congress a paper no one would have given a thought to, had not Whistler immortalised it. Horsley said:

> "If those who talk and write so glibly as to the desirability of artists devoting themselves to the representation of the naked human form, only knew a tithe of the degradation enacted before the model is sufficiently hardened to her shameful calling, they would forever hold their tongues and pens in supporting the practice. Is not clothedness a distinct type and feature of our Christian faith? All art representations of nakedness are out of harmony with it."

Whistler answered with "one of the little things that Providence sometimes sent him": "*Horsley soit qui mal y pense,*" he wrote on a label, and fastened it to the *Note in Green and Violet.* The British Artists were alarmed, for to enter Suffolk Street was not to abandon all hope of the Academy. The label was removed, but not before it had been seen. The *Pall Mall* was pleased to refer to the label as Whistler's "indignant protest against the idea that there is any immorality in the nude." But Whistler, who knew when ridicule served better than indignation, wrote, "Art certainly requires no 'indignant protest' against the unseemliness of senility. *Horsley soit qui mal y pense* is meanwhile a sweet sentiment—why more—and why 'morality'?"

When Whistler was asked to join the Society, its revenue had been rapidly decreasing, and a deficit of five hundred pounds had to be faced. To meet the difficulty by economy he proposed, to begin with, that the luncheon on press day be discontinued. It was an almost general custom then to feast the critics who attended the press view of picture exhibitions. But in few was the cloth more lavishly spread for the press than at the British Artists', in few were boxes of cigars and whisky-and-soda placed so conveniently. Some critics resented it, others liked it. Press day, the dreariest in the year at the Royal Academy, was the most delightful at the British Artists', they said. Mr. Sidney Starr tells a story of one of these press views, when Whistler had not hung his picture, but only the frame:

> "Telegrams were sent imploring the placing of the canvas. But the only answer that came was, 'The Press have ye always with you, feed my lambs.' A smoking concert followed during the exhibition. At this, one critic said to the Master, 'Your picture is not up to your mark; it is not good this time.' 'You

should not say it isn't good; you should say you don't like it, and then, you know, you're perfectly safe; now come and have something you do like, have some whisky,' said Whistler."

In the place of the luncheon, Whistler suggested a Sunday breakfast when members should pay for themselves and their guests. But members were horrified, and his motion was rejected.

In April 1886, Mr. William Graham's collection came up for auction at Christie's. The sale brought to it all the buyers and admirers of Rossetti, Burne-Jones, Holman Hunt, many of whose best pictures Graham had bought. Whistler's *Nocturne in Blue and Silver* (*Blue and Gold*), *Old Battersea Bridge* belonged to him. When it appeared, "there was a slight attempt at an ironical cheer, which, being mistaken for serious applause, was instantly suppressed by an angry hiss all round," and it was sold for sixty pounds to Mr. R. H. C. Harrison. Whistler acknowledged, through the *Observer* (April 11, 1886), "the distinguished, though I fear unconscious, compliment so publicly paid." Such recognition rarely, he said, came to the painter during his lifetime, and to his friends he spoke of it as an unheard-of success, the first time such a thing had happened. The hisses still in their ears, the British Artists were dismayed by his one contribution to the Summer Exhibition of 1886. This was a *Harmony in Blue and Gold*, a large full-length of a girl in transparent draperies of blue and green, leaning against a railing and holding a parasol behind her, an arrangement, like the *Six Projects*, uniting classic design with Japanese detail. The draperies were transparent; and to defy Horsley and the British Matron was no part of the British Artists' policy. But this time they escaped without scandal. Whistler sent no other pictures to Suffolk Street; he was not represented at all at the Grosvenor, and at the Salon only by his *Sarasate*, which went on afterwards to the

"XX" Club in Brussels. His principal show in 1886 was at Messrs. Dowdeswell's Gallery. They exhibited and published for him this year the *Set of Twenty-Six Etchings*, twenty-one of the plates done in Venice, the other five in England, the price of the *Set* fifty guineas. With the prints he issued the often quoted *Propositions*, the first series: the laws, as he defined them, of etching. He upheld that, in etching, as in every other art, the space covered should be in proportion to the means used for covering it, and that the delicacy of the needle demands the smallness of the plate; that the "Remarque," then so much in vogue, emanated from the amateur; that there should be no margin to receive a "Remarque"; and that the habit of margin again came from the outsider. For a few years these *Propositions* were accepted by artists. At the present time, they are ignored or defied, and the bigger the plate, the better pleased is the etcher and his public. It was a little later in the year, in May, that Messrs. Dowdeswell arranged in their gallery a second series of *Notes—Harmonies —Nocturnes*. A few were in oil, a few in pencil, but the larger number were pastels and water-colours. They were studies of the nude, impressions of the sea at Dieppe and Dover, St. Ives and Trouville, the little shops of London and Paris, the skies and canals of Holland. Whistler decorated the gallery in *Brown and Gold;* choosing the brown paper for the walls; designing the mouldings of the dado. Mr. Walter Dowdeswell still has the sketch in which he suggested the scheme of raw umber, yellow ochre and raw Sienna, with white, and the brown and yellow hangings, and yellow velarium. The exhibition was received with mingled expressions of praise and blame, and it would not have been a success financially, had not Mr. H. S. Theobald, K.C., purchased, in the end, all that earlier buyers left on Messrs. Dowdeswell's hands.

In the following summer Mr. Burr refused to stand again for

CREMORNE GARDENS
(*Nocturne No. III.*)

WESTMINSTER
(*Nocturne, Blue and Silver*)

the Presidency, and, at a General Meeting (June 1, 1886), Whistler was elected in his place. Mr. Ingram tells us that the excitement at this election was intense. Whistler alone was calm and unmoved. Mr. Ingram, a scrutineer, remembers coming for Whistler's vote, and being so excited himself that Whistler tried to reassure him : " Never mind, never mind, you've done your best ! " Whistler was elected and the meeting adjourned to the Hogarth Club for supper. " *J'y suis, j'y reste,*" Whistler wired to his brother. The comic papers were full of caricatures, the serious papers of astonishment. He was hailed as " President Whistler " by his friends, and denounced by members of the Society as an artist with no claim to be called British. Younger artists, William Stott of Oldham among them, rushed to his support, and one French critic in London was bold enough to declare his place to be in the Louvre between Velasquez and Tintoretto. Whistler had intended going to America in the autumn, but the journey was indefinitely postponed. He wrote to the *World* (October 13, 1886), " this is no time for hesitation—one cannot continually disappoint a Continent," and he settled down to the new and difficult task of directing the fortunes of a Society which was far from prosperous and looked to him for help in its evil day, its members divided among themselves, in nothing more than in their confidence in him as President.

CHAPTER XXX. THE BRITISH ARTISTS—THE FALL. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-SIX TO EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-EIGHT

ACCORDING to the constitution of the British Artists, the President, though elected in June, does not take office until December. Whistler presided for the first time at a meeting on December 10, 1886, and, from that day, he was supported devotedly by one faction and opposed by the other with hostility and a want of loyalty which led to failure in the end.

His interest became more active with his new responsibility. His first appearance as President in the Winter Exhibition (1886–87) was an artistic success for the British Artists. He decorated the galleries with the care he gave to his own shows. He put up a velarium, he hung the walls with muslin. For those who worked with him there was a moment of despair, for at the last the muslin gave out, leaving a bare space under the ceiling. "But what matter?" Whistler said, "the battens are well placed, they make decorative lines," and the bare space became part of the decoration. He would allow no overcrowding, the walls were to be the background of good pictures well spaced and well arranged. He urged the virtue of rejection. Mr. Sidney Starr says, "he was oblivious to every interest but the quality of the work shown." He told Mr. Menpes, one of the Hanging Committee,

> "If you are uncertain for a moment, say 'Out.' We want clean spaces round our pictures. We want them to be seen. The British Artists' must cease to be a shop."

This was his first offence. The modern exhibition is nothing but a shop, and as long as most artists have their way a shop it must remain. He himself was exhibiting a splendid group that included the *Nocturne in Brown and Gold* (afterwards *Blue and Gold*), *St. Mark's, Venice; Harmony in Red: Lamplight,* the portrait of Mrs. Godwin; and *Harmony in White and Ivory: Lady Colin Campbell,* a beautiful portrait of a beautiful woman, one of many that have disappeared. It was not finished when Whistler sent it to the exhibition, which was made an excuse by dissatisfied members to propose its removal. The question was not "put" at the request of the meeting when the matter came up, but another proposition to define the rights of the President and the President-elect was carried.

Whistler's interest was no less active in the Society's business affairs than in the arrangement of its gallery. One of his first acts was to offer to advance or loan the Society five hundred pounds to pay off its pressing debt. Mr. Sidney Starr describes him,

> "during this time of fluctuating finances, pawning his large gold medal from Paris one day, lending five hundred pounds to the British Artists the next. He often found 'a long face and a short account at the bank,' as he said one day."

He did everything he could to broaden the scope and increase the prestige of the Society. All that was "charming" was to be encouraged, all that was tedious was to be done away with. He secured distinguished artists as members: Charles Keene, Alfred Stevens, and the more promising among the younger men. He allowed several to call themselves in the catalogue "pupils of Whistler," and to make drawings of the gallery, and of his pictures, which he had first made himself, for the illustrated papers. The curious will find sketches by him of the *Sarasate* in the *Pall Mall's Pictures of* 1885, and of the *Harmony in Blue and Gold,* as well as

of his exhibition at Dowdeswell's gallery, in *Pictures of* 1886. But Mr. Theodore Roussel, Mr. Walter Sickert, Mr. Sidney Starr now signed these drawings for reproduction. He did his best for the Art Unions organised by the Society, giving a plate, *The Fish Shop—Busy Chelsea* one year, and another, a little picture done at St. Ives. Whistler's greatest exertions were devoted to the improvement of the exhibitions. In the March meeting (1887) he proposed a limit of size for all the exhibits, he contributed twenty pounds towards a further scheme of decoration, and he presented four velvet curtains for the doorways in the large room. There is a drawing, showing curtains and velarium by Mr. Roussel in the *Pall Mall's Pictures of* 1887. All Whistler's finest work was again reserved for the gallery in Suffolk Street. His early pictures, *Nocturne in Blue and Gold, Valparaiso Bay; Nocturne in Black and Gold, The Gardens* (Cremorne); *Harmony in Grey, Chelsea in Ice,* were hung that year, and with them one of his latest, *Arrangement in Violet and Pink, Portrait of Mrs. Walter Sickert.*

To those in opposition, the President's innovations seemed an interference with their rights. He might pay their debts, —that was one thing; it was quite another to make their gallery beautiful with the beauty to which serious papers like the *Portfolio,* applied the old adjective "eccentric," and to "chuck out" their pictures. Their resentment increased on the occasion of a visit from the Prince of Wales. Whistler stayed late one night in Suffolk Street, to finish the work of decoration. When the members came the next day, doors and mantelpieces were painted primrose yellow. There was grumbling, and the dissatisfaction was carried that evening to a Smoking Concert at the Hogarth Club, where everybody was talking of the arrangement in yellow. Whistler, when they ventured to find fault with him, refused to have anything further to do with the decorations, though these were still

unfinished. He was telegraphed for. "So discreet of you all at the Hogarth," was the answer, and he did not appear until it was time to meet the Prince, though dissatisfied members worked to tone down the yellows, to the very moment of the Prince's arrival. Whistler told us:

> "I went downstairs to meet the Prince. As we were walking up, I a little in front with the Princess, the Prince, who always liked to be well informed in these matters, asked what the Society was?—was it an old institution? What was its history? 'Sir, it has none, its history begins to-day!' I said."

The dissatisfaction was carried promptly to a meeting, when a proposition was made and passed "that the experiment of hanging pictures in an isolated manner be discontinued," and that, in future, enough works be accepted to cover the vacant space above and below the line—in fact, that the gallery be hung as before. It is said that some members went so far as to make an estimate of the amount of wall space left bare, and calculate the exact loss it meant in pounds, shillings and pence.

We saw this exhibition, though we did not see Whistler. We remember the quiet, well-spaced walls, and the portrait of Mrs. Sickert, also works by Dannat and William Stott. It should not be forgotten that the British Artists' was arranged and hung by Whistler years before there was any idea of artistic hanging in German Secessions,—we believe before there were any Secessions. Whistler had applied to his own shows the same method of spacing and hanging and decorating the walls with an appropriate colour scheme. It had occurred to nobody before him that beautiful things should be shown to the public beautifully and it is not too much to say that the attention given to-day to the artistic arrangement of picture exhibitions is due entirely to Whistler.

1887 was Queen Victoria's Jubilee year, and every Society of artists prepared addresses of congratulation to her Majesty.

Whistler could not permit his Society to appear less ceremoniously loyal than the rest. His account to us of his conduct at this official moment is interesting:

"Well, you know, I found that the Academy and the Institute and the rest of them were preparing addresses to the Queen, and so I went to work too, and I prepared a most wonderful address. Instead of the illuminated performances for such occasions, I took a dozen folio sheets of my old Dutch etching paper. I had them bound by Zaehnsdorf. First, came the beautiful binding in yellow morocco and the inscription to Her Majesty, every word just in the right place,—most wonderful. You opened it, and on the first page you found a beautiful little drawing of the royal arms that I had made myself; the second page, with an etching of Windsor, as though—'there's where you live!' On the third page, the address began. I made decorations all round the text in water-colour, at the top the towers of Windsor, down one side a great battleship plunging through the waves, and below, the sun that never sets on the British Empire,—What?—The following pages were not decorated, just the most wonderful address, explaining the age and dignity of the Society, its devotion to Her Glorious, Gracious Majesty, and suggesting the honour it would be if this could be recognised by a title that would show the Society to belong specially to Her. Then, the last page; you turned, and there was a little etching of my house at Chelsea—'And now, here's where I live!' And then you closed it, and at the back of the cover was the Butterfly. This was all done and well on its way, and not a word was said to the Society, when the Committee wrote and asked me if I would come to a meeting as they wished to consult me. It was about an address to Her Majesty—all the other Societies were sending them—and they thought they should too. I asked what they proposed spending—they were aghast when I suggested that the guinea they mentioned might not meet a twentieth of the cost. But, all the time, my beautiful address was on its way to Windsor, and finally came the Queen's acknowledgment and command that the Society should be called Royal—I carried this to a meeting and it was stormy. One member got up and protested against one thing and another, and declared his intention of resigning. 'You had better make

a note of it, Mr. Secretary,' I said. And then I got up with great solemnity, and I announced the honour conferred upon them by Her Gracious Majesty, and they jumped up and they rushed towards me with outstretched hands. But I waved them all off, and I continued with the ceremonial to which they objected. For the ceremonial was one of their grievances. They were accustomed to meet in shirt-sleeves—free-and-easy fashion, which I would not stand. Nor would I consent to what was the rule and tradition of the Society: I would not, when I spoke, step down from the chair and stand up in the body of the meeting, but I remained always where I was. But, the meeting over, then I sent for champagne."

Whistler, as President of the British Artists, was invited to the Jubilee ceremonies in Westminster Abbey, and in Mr. Lorimer's painting of that event he may be seen on one side of the triforium, with Leighton on the other. He was asked also to the State garden-party at Buckingham Palace, and to the Naval Review off Spithead, when he made the *Jubilee Series* of etchings and at least one water-colour.

The year before, Mr. Ayerst Ingram had proposed that the Society should give a show of the President's work to precede their Summer Exhibition of 1887. This had met with so many objections that, though the motion was not withdrawn as Whistler desired, it was then allowed to drop. After the new honours were obtained by him for the Society, and while he was travelling in Belgium and Holland, an effort was made by the few who were his friends to revive the scheme. Mr. Ingram did what he could; Mr. Walter Dowdeswell was appointed Honorary Secretary; guarantors were found, and the financial risk feared by the Society thus disposed of; owners of pictures were written to; it was suggested that the show should be held in February and March, 1888. But Whistler, doubting the sincerity of the Society, would not run the risk of anything less than an "absolute triumph of perfection" for an undertaking made in the

name of the British artists, or his own. He objected to the no success that is worse than failure. At the end of September, nothing definite had been arranged, and Whistler told Mr. Ingram, that his " solitary evidence of active interest could hardly bring about a result sufficient to excuse such an eleventh hour effort."

He was right. The opposition in the Society was strong, and many members were now in open warfare with the President. They refused to support him in his proposition that no member of the Society should be, or should remain, a member of any other Society ; and when he followed this with the proposition that no member of the Royal Society of British Artists, who was a member of any other Society, should serve on the Selecting or Hanging Committee, they again defeated him. Nor did they persuade him to reconsider the formal withdrawal, on November 18, of his permission to show his works. He sent, however, in the ordinary way, several watercolours and the twelve etchings of the *Naval Review* to the Winter Exhibition (1887–88), and also four lithographs from the *Notes* published that autumn by the Goupils. They were described by the *Magazine of Art* (December 1887), as mere "'Notes' reproduced in marvellous *facsimile*," which gave Whistler his chance for another courteous reminder in the *World* to " the bewildered one." The critic might inquire, he suggested : " the safe and well-conducted one informs himself." Within the Society, he had once more to contend against the objections to his hanging and spacing, and a fresh grievance this winter was that some of the now limited space was filled with the work of Monet, as yet hardly known in England. Few agreed with one of the older members, who, when he looked at Whistler's *Red Note*, declared, " If he can do that, I'll forgive him—he can do anything." The general opinion was that " Whistler would have his way, and didn't mind if he made enemies in getting it," and it began to

be whispered that even in the matter of the memorial, he had been dictatorial. The situation is best described in the words of Mr. Holmes to us : " With a little more of Disraeli and a little less of Oliver Cromwell, Whistler would have triumphed."

The crisis came in April 1888, just before the Summer Exhibition. It was suggested that the Council be asked to communicate with the President as to the removal of temporary decorations which he had designed and they had paid for. Whistler was indignant. He had worked over the affairs of the Society as though they were his own ; he had used every endeavour to restore its fortunes and give its shows distinction. In return, members only hindered him. It was not his habit to draw a veil of reserve over his indignation, and he expressed it vigorously. One decoration the Society did not object to was a velarium, since it meant no loss of wall space, and, when Whistler removed his, they ordered a new one. Whistler, through his Secretary, explained to the Committee that the velarium was his patent—" a patent taken out by the Greeks and Romans," is Mr. Ingram's comment. We have been told by a British Artist that Whistler got out an injunction, that when the Committee, with their order for the velarium, hurried to Hampton's, his Secretary was at their heels in a hansom with the injunction, that they arrived at Liberty's together, but that, somehow, they managed in the end to evade him. A velarium was made and put up, and they at once proceeded to get rid of their President. At a meeting on May 7, a letter signed by eight members, whose names do not appear in the Minutes, was read, asking the President to call a meeting to request Mr. James A. McNeill Whistler to resign his membership in the Society, and Whistler, as President, called the meeting and signed the Minutes. One of the eight has told us that he endorsed the letter because he knew what was sure to follow, and he wanted to spare Whistler a worse unpleasantness. The

President made a speech, in which he claimed that his action, in the matter of the velarium, was not inimical to the welfare of the Society, but the speech was not recorded. He permitted no one else to speak in opposition, and the subject was dropped. At the Special Meeting called by him the same month, there was a more exhaustive discussion. Whistler declared his position. His opponents presented an array of lawyers' letters, which, they said, showed that Whistler had threatened injunctions, had greatly impeded the Executive in the decoration of the galleries, and had influenced many distinguished people to keep away from the private view. A vote was taken, virtually for his expulsion, though Mr. Ingram proposed, in its place, a vote of censure. Whistler refused at first to put the motion to expel himself, but, finally, was compelled to do so. There were eighteen votes for, nineteen against it, and nine members did not vote. The votes, Whistler said, when he addressed the meeting after the ballot, showed that the Society approved of his action. Mr. Francis James at once proposed a vote of censure on those gentlemen who had signed the letter, but this was not passed, for the feeling against Whistler was, after all, very strong. On June 4, at the annual election, when a whip had been sent round to old members, Wyke Bayliss was elected President in his place and Whistler tendered his resignation as member, congratulating the Society on the election :

> "Now, at last, you must be satisfied. You can no longer say you have the right man in the wrong place ! "

Mr. Sidney Starr recalls his saying also :

> "Now I understand the feelings of all those who, since the world began, have tried to save their fellow men."

Almost all the minority resigned. Indeed, one member, Mr. Menpes, foreseeing the inevitable, had resigned a month earlier, a fact which led to Whistler's comment on " the early

rat who leaves the sinking ship." Keene, Alfred Stevens, Theodore Roussel, all the more brilliant of the younger men, who had joined the Society with him, left it with him, so that he said afterwards, "the Artists have come out, and the British remain."

Mr. Menpes describes a supper of the "Artists," after the meeting, at the Hogarth Club, Whistler in high spirits, swinging a toy policeman's rattle to the measure of "Yankee Doodle." Menpes was taken back into favour, and joined the party. "What are you going to do with them all?" he asked Whistler. "Lose them," said Whistler. But he did not lose them all, and a few of his faithful supporters pride themselves on his friendship to the end.

According to the rules, Whistler was active President until December, and until December he retained his post. He was away in the summer of 1888, but he presided at a meeting on November 11, and again on the 28th, when he made a statement of his relations with the Society and his objects and aims concerning it. After this, he gave up the chair to Mr. Bayliss. He had been President for two years, and a member for four. After November 28, 1888, his name appears in the official records only on two occasions: first, on January 4, 1889, in connection with a dispute over the notice board outside the gallery; and then on July 20, 1903, when Wyke Bayliss stated "that, acting on the feeling that it would be the wish of the Society, he had ordered a wreath to be sent in the name of the Society on the occasion of the funeral of Mr. Whistler."

The papers were not so shy of the President's name as the Minute Books. The differences between him and the Society found the publicity which Whistler could never escape. He said to the men who resigned with him, "Come and make history for posterity," and, in his usual fashion, he saw that the record was accurate. He had hardly left the Society

when the notice board, with the Butterfly and the lion which he had repainted, was altered; he immediately wrote a letter to state the fact in the *Pall Mall Gazette.* Reporters and interviewers gave the British Artists' reasons for their late President's resignation and the qualifications for the post of his successor; Whistler lost no time in explaining his own position and his estimate of the new President. It cannot be said too often that his letters to the press, criticised as trivial and undignified, were written deliberately that his own version of "history" might "go down." Many pages of *The Gentle Art* are filled with the details of his relations with the British Artists. The gaiety of his letters was mistaken for flippancy, because the more solemn and ponderous his "enemies" became, the more "joyous" he invariably grew in disposing of them. He did not spare the British Artists. The *Pall Mall* undertook to describe the disaster of the "Whistlerian policy" in Suffolk Street by *Statistics* and to extol the strength of Wyke Bayliss:

> "The sales of the Society during the year 1881 were under five thousand pounds; 1882, under six thousand; 1883, under seven thousand; 1884, under eight thousand; 1885 (the first year of Mr. Whistler's rule), they fell to under four thousand; 1886, under three thousand; 1887, under two thousand; and, the present year, 1888, under one thousand. . . . The new President . . . is . . . the hero of three Bond Street 'one-man exhibitions,' a Board-school chairman, a lecturer, champion chess-player of Surrey, a member of the Rochester Diocesan Council, a Shakespearian student, a Fellow of the Society of Cyclists, a Fellow of the Society of Antiquarians, and public orator of Noviomagus."

Whistler's answer was characteristic, serious in intention, light on the surface. It pointed out

> "the, for once, not unamusing 'fact' that the disastrous and simple Painter Whistler only took in hand the reins of government at least a year after the former driver had been pitched

NOCTURNE, BATTERSEA
(*Lithotint*)

LIMEHOUSE
(*Lithotint*)

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from his box, and half the money-bags had been already lost!—from eight thousand to four thousand at one fatal swoop! and the beginning of the end had set in! . . . . 'Four thousand pounds!' down it went—three thousand pounds—two thousand pounds—the figures are Wyke's—and this season, the ignominious 'one thousand pounds or under,' is none of my booking! and when last I saw the mad machine it was still cycling down the hill."

Whistler was disappointed if he did not show it. He joined the Society because he thought it an honour to have been invited. He was seldom invited to join anything, but, for that reason, he did not rush to accept the rare invitation. He would have nothing to do with the Art Congress started in the 'eighties, despite an effort to entangle him; nor would he do more than give his "benison," Mr. Walter Crane says, to the movement in 1886 to organise a National Art Exhibition, led by Mr. Crane, Mr. Holman Hunt, and Mr. George Clausen. But the age and traditions of the British Artists gave the Society dignity in his eyes. He who was called the most selfish of men would make any sacrifice for art, and, at the price of his time and energy, during his four years in Suffolk Street, he dragged the Society out of the slough in which it was floundering and made its exhibitions the most distinguished and most talked-about in London. Wyke Bayliss, who never understood him, wrote in *Olives:*

"Whistler's purpose was to make the British Artists a small, esoteric set, mine was to make it a great guild of the working artists of this country."

But Whistler said:

"I wanted to make the British Artists an art centre, they wanted to remain a shop."

If his word were not evidence enough, his earnestness in the policy he advocated would be proved by his adherence to it. Ten years later, as President of the International Society

of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers, he not only recommended but enforced the same measures: the decoration of the galleries, the refusal of bad work no matter who sent it, the proper hanging of the pictures accepted, the making of the exhibitions into real artistic events, the interesting of the public in them, the insistence that each artist should support his own Society's exhibitions only and should not be a member of any other Society. He may have been dictatorial, but without a leader nothing can be accomplished and at the British Artists' each British Artist wanted to lead. His Presidency began in mistrust and ended, as was inevitable, in discord and disappointment. For Whistler it had an indirect advantage in that the public, especially abroad—out of respect for the ancient institution he presided over—regarded him and his work henceforth with greater deference.

CHAPTER XXXI. MARRIAGE. THE YEAR EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-EIGHT

BEFORE Whistler left the British Artists he married Beatrix Godwin, widow of E. W. Godwin, the architect of the White House, and for years Whistler's strongest defender in the press. Godwin died October 6, 1886, and Whistler married on August 11, 1888.

Mrs. Whistler was the daughter of John Birnie Philip, now remembered as one of the sculptors who worked on the Albert Memorial. She was large, so that Whistler looked almost dwarfed beside her, dark and handsome, more foreign in appearance than English. Whistler delighted in a tradition that there was gypsy blood in her family. She had studied art in Paris, and he was proud of her as a talented pupil. Her work included several decorative designs and a series of etched plates, made to illustrate the English edition of Van Eeden's *Little Johannes*, a fantastic tale of an elfen world full of strange beings. Only a few of the plates were finished, and of these some proofs were shown in the first exhibition of the International Society, and in the Paris Memorial Exhibition. Mr. Labouchere holds himself responsible for the marriage, and told the story of how it came about in *Truth* (July 23, 1903):

> "I believe that I am responsible for his marriage to the widow of Mr. Godwin, the architect. She was a remarkably pretty woman, and very agreeable, and both she and he were thorough Bohemians. I was dining with them and some others one evening at Earl's Court. They were obviously greatly attracted to each other, and in a vague sort of way they thought

of marrying. So I took the matter in hand to bring things to a practical point. 'Jemmy,' I said, 'will you marry Mrs. Godwin?' —'Certainly,' he replied.—'Mrs. Godwin,' I said, 'will you marry Jemmy?'—'Certainly,' she replied.—'When?' I asked.— 'Oh, some day,' said Whistler.—'That won't do,' I said; 'we must have a date.' So they both agreed that I should choose the day, what church to come to for the ceremony, provide the clergyman, and give the bride away. I fixed an early date, and got the then Chaplain of the House of Commons [the Rev. Mr. Byng] to perform the ceremony. It took place a few days later.

"After the ceremony was over, we adjourned to Whistler's studio, where he had prepared a banquet. The banquet was on the table, but there were no chairs. So we sat on packing-cases, The happy pair, when I left, had not quite decided whether they would go that evening to Paris, or remain in the studio. How unpractical they were was shown when I happened to meet the bride the day before the marriage in the street:

"'Don't forget to-morrow,' I said.—'No,' she replied, 'I am just going to buy my trousseau.'—'A little late for that, is it not?' I asked.—'No,' she answered, 'for I am only going to buy a new toothbrush and a new sponge, as one ought to have new ones when one marries.'"

The wedding took place at St. Mary Abbott's, Kensington, in the presence of Dr. and Mrs. Whistler, one of Mrs. Godwin's sisters and three or four friends. Mr. Labouchere gave the bride away and Mr. Jopling-Rowe was best man. Whistler had recently left 454 Fulham Road and the Vale, with its memories of "Maud," who was at that time in Paris, for the Tower House, Tite Street, and the suddenness of his marriage gave no time to put things in order. There were not only packing-cases in the dining-room—usually one of the first rooms furnished in every house he moved into—but the household was in most other respects unprepared for the reception of a bride. The wedding breakfast was ordered from the Café Royal, and the bride's sister hurriedly got a wedding cake from Buszard's.

74 CHEYNE WALK, CHELSEA

TOWER HOUSE, TITE STREET, CHELSEA

21 CHEYNE WALK, CHELSEA

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The rest of the summer and autumn was spent in France, part of the time in Boulogne. Mr. and Mrs. Cole

> " met Jimmy and his wife on the sands ; they came up with us to Rue de la Paix—down to bathe—Jimmy sketching on sands ; the W.s turned up after lunch. With Jimmy to the iron and rag *marché* near Boulevard Prince Albert [no doubt in search of old paper as well as of subjects]—he sketched (water-colours) a dingy shop. Later we dined with them at the Casino—Pleasant *parti à quatre*—Jimmy in excellent form. Leaving to-morrow."

From Boulogne they went on to Touraine, stopping on the way at Chartres, most of the time lost to their friends as they intended to be lost. It was Whistler's first real holiday. He was taking it lazily, he wrote home, in straw hat and white shoes, rejoicing in the grapes and melons, getting the pleasure out of it that France always gave him. But he got more than pleasure. He brought back to London about thirty beautiful little plates of Tours and Loches and Bourges, and settled down in London to wind up his connection with the British Artists.

Whistler was devoted to his wife who, henceforth, occupied a far more prominent position in his life than his friends could have anticipated. Indeed, the course of his life was entirely changed by his marriage. He saw little of his former friends in London, and less even of society. For months he was a wanderer, and these months were barren of important work. Not that Mrs. Whistler was indifferent to his art or stood in its way. She was sympathetic, helpful, interested, and intelligent. He liked to have her in the studio with him ; when she could not come, he brought the pictures he was painting home for her to see. He worked consciously with her critical eye upon him. He consulted her in his difficulties, he looked to her to rejoice with him in his triumphs, and she shared only too willingly the disappointment in-

evitable in the career of the creative artist. But it cannot be denied that for him the period of great schemes and their successful completion came to an end with his marriage. Although in later years he produced pictures exquisite in their accomplishment, we look in vain for large canvases like *The Mother* and *Carlyle*, the *Sarasate* and *Lady Meux*. This was no doubt the result partly of his pleasure in his new domestic conditions, and partly of circumstances that prevented him from remaining long enough in any one place for continuous work to be possible. An artist must be able to devote himself without interruption to his great schemes, or else must have a very different temperament from Whistler's. After a year or so in London and two or three happy years in Paris which Mrs. Whistler always said she did not deserve, her health necessitated wandering again.

Commissions at last began to come to Whistler as they never had before, and his new interests and eventually the care and sorrow of Mrs. Whistler's fatal illness left him neither the time nor the freedom for them. As he said to us one day :

> "Now, they want these things—why didn't they want them twenty years ago, when I wanted to do them, and could have done them ?—and they were just as good twenty years ago as they are now."

Few of the large portraits begun during these years were completed. And even after his wife's death, he struggled in vain to return to the old conditions and regain with them the power of uninterrupted application to which the world owes his greatest masterpieces. It is true that his work never deteriorated, that, as he said himself, he brought it ever nearer to the perfection which alone could satisfy him. He never produced anything finer than *The Master Smith* and *The Little Rose of Lyme Regis* painted toward the end of his married life, or *His Reverence* and the series of children's heads of his last years. But these were planned on a smaller

scale and required less continuity of effort than the large full-lengths and the decorative designs he longed to execute but was never able to finish, sometimes not even to begin. As will be seen later on, Whistler, with advancing years, became more and more sure of himself, more and more the master of his materials but circumstances forced him to find his pleasure and exercise his greater knowledge in the production of smaller work.

CHAPTER XXXII. WORK. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-FOUR TO EIGHTEEN NINETY

THE years of the *Ten o'Clock* and the British Artists and the first one or two of Whistler's married life were very prolific, though comparatively few important pictures belong to them. He devoted more time than ever to water-colour and pastel, to etching and lithography. He was continually going and coming, making little journeys in England or on the Continent, especially in Belgium and Holland, and he had boxes and bags with compartments and arrangements for his colours, his plates, his lithographic materials. These he took with him everywhere, and it is impossible to say—he did not know himself—the exact number of small works in oil, water-colour and pastel that he produced during these years.

He had always used the medium of water-colour since his schooldays, but, until he went to Venice, not to any extent. Some of the Venetian drawings show that he then was not really master of it. But as soon as he took it up seriously, the results he got, both in figure and landscape, were admirable. He touched perfection in many a little angry sea at Dieppe, or note in Holland, or impression in Paris, but as not many are dated, we cannot learn from them when he reached the mastery in the art of water-colour painting which they reveal. He probably would not have been sure of the dates himself. We have gone through drawers in his studio with him, when he expressed the utmost surprise on finding certain things, as

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THE BEACH
(*Water-Colour*)

he had forgotten them and also when and where they were painted or drawn. He suffered from the confusion and realised the importance of making a complete list of his works, with their dates, and there were various projects and commencements. After several attempts, he found it took too much of his time. We know that he asked Mr. Freer to trace, for this purpose, his pictures in America, and Mr. D. Croal Thomson to do him the same service in England.

There is no such difficulty with the etchings, and probably the great Grolier Club Catalogue, which is announced for publication, will clear up all remaining doubts. Between Whistler's return from Venice, in 1880, and his going to Paris in 1892, there is already the record of ninety plates in England. They begin with the *Regent's Quadrant,* which we know was done almost at once, while he was living in Air Street, and of which a signed proof once was brought to us by his landlady, who called it an original drawing, and said it had been made out of her window. Then follow plates of little shops in Chelsea, Gray's Inn, Westminster, the Wild West at Earl's Court, Whitechapel, Sandwich, the Jubilee in the Abbey and many figure-subjects. There is also the *Swan and Iris,* the copy of an unfinished picture by Cecil Lawson, for Mr. Edmund Gosse's *Memoir* of the painter (1883). It was the only plate, since those published by the Junior Etching Club, which he made as an illustration. *La Marchande de Moutarde,* in its second state, was issued in *English Etchings* (1888) and *Billingsgate* in the *Portfolio* (1878), but they had been etched long before, with no idea of illustration or publication in book or magazine.

The London plates are mostly simple in subject, and they have been therefore frequently dismissed as unimportant. But many are most delightfully composed, while the detail in the little figures is full of observation. The subjects show that they were rapidly done. Whistler, carrying the

small plates about with him, sketched the subjects he found on copper as other artists sketch on paper. Three were made at Buffalo Bill's Wild West probably in an afternoon; one in Westminster Abbey, during Queen Victoria's Jubilee (1887) celebration; and the whole set of ten during the Naval Review, with a plate at Tilbury, on his embarking, and another at Portsmouth on landing. The prints of this *Series*, as we know the exact space of time in which they were done, prove strikingly his wonderful power of giving a momentary impression in a few lines on a piece of copper, for they suggest, in extraordinary fashion, the picturesque aspect of the great naval spectacle.

In the autumn of 1887 he went to Belgium with Dr. and Mrs. William Whistler, stopping at Brussels, Ostend, and Bruges. In Brussels he etched the Grande Place, the Town Hall, the palaces, the little shops and streets and courts, with the intention, never fulfilled, of issuing them as another *Set*. M. Octave Maus, who knew him, says,

> "he was enchanted there with the picturesque and disreputable quarter of les Marolles in the old town. He was frequently to be met in the alleys which pour a squalid populace into the old High Street, engaged in scratching on the copper his impressions of the swarming life around him. When the inquisitive throng pressed him too hard, the artist merely pointed his graver at the arm, or neck, or cheek of one of the intruders. The threatening weapon, with his sharp, spiteful laugh, put them at once to flight."

Sometimes, Dr. and Mrs. Whistler found him, safe out of the way of the crowd, in the bandstand of the Grande Place, where three of the most beautiful of the series were done.

These studies mark another development in his technique. With the fewest, the most delicate, lines he expressed the most complicated and the most picturesque architecture. They were probably bitten with very little stopping-out, and

INTERIOR OF HALL

they are printed with a sharpness that shows, and does not conceal, their wonderful drawing. M. Duret has said to us that, in them, Whistler has given the bones, the skeleton, of the architecture. As was the case with all the plates of these years, except the Dutch, few proofs were ever pulled.

The etchings in Touraine, to group the plates of the summer of 1888 together, though they were not all done in Touraine, have never been published as a *Set*. They include plates made at Tours, Loches, Vovés, Bourges, Amboise, and Blois, and two or three views of *châteaux* it is difficult to identify. As in Belgium, again great architecture gave him his principal subjects, and again his simplicity of treatment shows that if, as a rule, he refrained from the rendering of architecture, it was from no desire of evading difficulties of drawing, as his critics have been over-ready to suggest. The line is stronger, and the biting much more powerful, than in the Belgian plates.

The year after his marriage and the summer in Touraine, he went to Holland, where he made seventeen plates in and around Dordrecht and Amsterdam, producing the wonderful *Nocturne: Dance House, The Embroidered Curtain, The Balcony*, the *Zaandam* in which he surpassed Rembrandt in Rembrandt's own subjects. His success is the more surprising because scarcely anywhere does the artist work under such difficulties as in Holland. The little Dutch boys are the worst in the world, and the grown people can be as bad. In Amsterdam, the women in the houses on one of the canals, where Whistler sat in a boat working, objected, and emptied basins of water out of the windows above him. He only managed to dodge them just in time, and he had to call on the police, when, he told us, the next interruption was a big row above him, and

"I looked up, dodging the filthy pails to see the women vanishing backward, being carried off to wherever they carry people

in Holland. After that, I had no more trouble, but I always had a policeman whenever I had a boat."

In the Dutch plates he returned more to the methods perfected at Venice in *The Traghetto* and *The Beggars*. After he brought the work back to London, he was interviewed on the subject for the *Pall Mall Gazette* (March 4, 1890), and is reported to have said :

> " First you see me at work on the Thames (producing one of the famous series). Now, there you see the crude and hard detail of the beginner. So far, so good. There, you see, all is sacrificed to exactitude of outline. Presently, and almost unconsciously, I begin to criticise myself, and to feel the craving of the artist for form and colour. The result was the second stage, which my enemies call inchoate, and I call Impressionism. The third stage I have shown you. In that I have endeavoured to combine stages one and two. You have the elaboration of the first stage, and the quality of the second."

Though we hesitate to accept the words throughout as his, this is still an interesting statement inspired by him of his development as an etcher, and a suggestive description of his aims in the Dutch series. For you find in some of the plates more detail than he gave in the Venetian, and yet form is expressed not in the outline of the London prints, but in the broken line of the work that followed, and you see, as you really would in looking at Nature, the effect of a landscape, or a house, as a whole and not in its intricate and subordinate parts. You see it also with a richness of colour that etchers have seldom obtained without a mass of cross-hatching that takes away from the spontaneity and freshness of the impression. It is curious to contrast the distant views of the town of Amsterdam and the windmills of Zaandam with Rembrandt's etchings of similar subjects, and to note the greater feeling of space and distance that Whistler gives by his simplification of the foreground and his sacrifice of certain

THE FUR JACKET

Arrangement in Black and Brown

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facts, so that he might render on his copper the appearance, the aspect, which the actual scene presented to his eyes. The work is more elaborate and delicate than in any previous plates, so delicate sometimes that it seems underbitten. But the method necessitated this. He drew with such minuteness that hardly any of the ground, the varnish, is left on the plates, and when he bit them, he could only bite very slightly to prevent the delicate modelling from being lost. He never had been so successful in applying his scientific theories to etching, and rarely more satisfied with the results. His first idea was to publish the prints, like the two Venetian series in a *Set*, through the Fine Art Society, but nothing came of it. A few were bought at once for the South Kensington and Windsor Collections, and several were shown that spring in Mr. Dunthorne's gallery. About this time, we returned for a few months to London and J. commenced to write occasionally in the London press, succeeding Mr. George Bernard Shaw as art critic on the *Star*. This is his impression, written when he saw them then :

"I stepped in at Dunthorne's the other afternoon, to have a look at the etchings of Amsterdam by Mr. Whistler. There are only eight of them, I think, but they are eight of the most exquisite renderings by the most independent man of the century. With two exceptions they are only studies of very undesirable lodgings and tenements on canal banks, old crumbling brick houses reflected in sluggish canals, balconies with figures leaning over them, clothes hanging in decorative lines, a marvellously graceful figure carelessly standing in the great water-door of an overhanging house, every figure filled with life and movement, and all its character expressed in half a dozen lines. The same houses, or others, at night, their windows illuminated and casting long trailing reflections in the water, seemed to be singularly unsuccessful, the plate being apparently under-bitten and played out. At any rate, that was the impression it produced on me. [We know now and have explained the reason for this.] Another there was, of a stretch of country looking across a canal, windmills beyond,

drawn as no one since Rembrandt could have done it, and in his plate the greatest of modern etchers has pitted himself against the greatest of the ancients, and has come through only too successfully for Rembrandt. There are three or four others, I understand not yet published; but this, certainly is the gem so far. The last is a great drawbridge, with suggestions of trees and houses, figures and boats, and a tower in the distance, done, I believe, from a canal in Amsterdam. This is the fourth distinct series of etchings, which Mr. Whistler has in the last thirty or thirty-five years given the world; the early miscellaneous French and English plates; the Thames series, valued by artists more than by collectors, though even to the latter they are worth more than their weight in gold; the Venetian plates; and now these; and between while, portraits as full of character as Rembrandt's, studies of London and Brussels, and I know not what else besides have come from his ever busy needle. Had Mr. Whistler never put brush to canvas, he has done enough in these plates to be able to say that he will not altogether die."

This is very youthful, but it expressed J.'s opinion when we hardly knew Whistler personally; we never heard that he disapproved of it; and we are glad to resurrect it to-day.

During this period, he produced also a large number of lithographs, excellently catalogued by Mr. T. R. Way, who printed most of them for him, and was, consequently, well qualified for the task. Three, *The Winged Hat, The Tyresmith,* and *Maunder's Fish Shop, Chelsea,* were published in 1890 in a shortlived periodical called *The Whirlwind,* edited by Mr. Herbert Vivian and the Hon. Stuart Erskine, " in the Legitimist cause " and to their own great amusement. They also published drawings by Mr. Sidney Starr after three of Whistler's pictures, and were at pains to boast in their own pages within a few weeks that the lithographs, issued for a penny, could be had only for five shillings. Five guineas would now be nearer the price.

Another lithograph, *Chelsea Rags,* came out in the January

NUDE FIGURE AND CUPID
(*Water-Colour*)

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number (1892) of the *Albemarle*, a monthly edited by Hubert Crackanthorpe, and W. H. Wilkins, one of those gay experiments in periodical literature no longer made. The four appeared as *Songs on Stone*, the title proposed for a portfolio of lithographs in colour which Mr. Heinemann announced, but which never got beyond some experimenal sketches and proofs.

CHAPTER XXXIII. HONOURS—EXHIBITIONS—NEW INTERESTS. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN EIGHTY-NINE TO EIGHTEEN NINETY

THE official recognition of Whistler in England was followed by official honours from abroad. While he was still President of the British Artists, he was asked for the first time to show in the International Exhibition at Munich (1888). He sent his *Lady Archibald Campbell* and was awarded a second-class medal. The best comment on the quality of the award was Whistler's letter of acknowledgment, in which he sent the Committee his " sentiments of tempered and respectable joy " and " complete appreciation of the second-hand compliment." Munich made amends. He was promptly elected an Honorary Member of the Bavarian Royal Academy, and, a year later, was given a first-class medal and the Cross of St. Michael, Almost at the same moment the French Government appointed him Chevalier of the Legion of Honour and he received a first-class medal at the Paris Universal Exhibition. Another gold medal this same year (1889) came from Amsterdam. The year before, Mr. E. J. Van Wisselingh had bought from Messrs. Dowdeswell *Effie Deans*, which he had seen in the Edinburgh Exhibition of 1886, though it was there skied out of almost everybody's sight. He sold it, within a very short time, to Baron Van Lynden, of The Hague, then making the fine collection bequeathed by the Baroness Van Lynden in 1900 to the Rijks Museum at Amsterdam. The picture is the only

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EFFIE DEANS

one to which Whistler gave a literary title, except the lovely *Annabel Lee,* never exhibited, of which there is a pastel in existence just as beautiful, once in the possession of Mr. Thomas Way, now in that of Mr. Freer. *Effie Deans* is apparently a portrait of "Maud," and it belongs to the period of *The Fur Jacket* and the *Rosa Corder.* The Butterfly was added later. The picture was not signed when bought by Baron Van Lynden, who, hearing from Van Wisselingh, that Whistler was in Holland, asked him to sign it. He not only did so, but we believe then added the quotation from the *Heart of Midlothian,* written at the bottom of the canvas: "She sunk her head upon her hand and remained seemingly unconscious as a statue," the only inscription of the kind on any of his paintings that we have ever seen. The picture was sent to the exhibition of 1889 in Amsterdam, where the *Mother* and *The Fur Jacket* were hung with it. We have heard that Israels and Mesdag, who were little in sympathy with Whistler, objected to a medal being given to him, but James Maris insisted.

Few things ever pleased Whistler more than the honours from Amsterdam, Munich, and Paris. To celebrate the Bavarian medal and decoration, his friends gave him a "complimentary dinner," at the Criterion on May 1, 1889. Mr. E. M. Underdown, Q.C., was in the chair. Two Royal Academicians, Sir W. Q. Orchardson, whose work Whistler admired, and Mr. Alfred Gilbert, a friend then and ever, were present, and also Sir Coutts Lindsay, Stuart Wortley, Edmund Yates—Atlas, who never failed him—among many others. Whistler was moved, and not ashamed to show it. Stuart Wortley, in a speech, said that Whistler had influenced every artist in England; Sir W. Q. Orchardson described him as "a true artist;" and, this time, Atlas spoke, not only with the weight of the *World* on his shoulders, but with praise and affection. Whistler began with a laugh at

this "age of rapid results when remedies insist upon their diseases." But his voice is said to have been full of emotion before the end :

> "You must feel that, for me, it is no easy task to reply under conditions of which I have so little habit. We are all even too conscious that mine has hitherto, I fear, been the gentle answer that sometimes turneth not away wrath. . . . . It has before now been borne in upon me that in surroundings of antagonism, I may have wrapped myself, for protection, in a species of misunderstanding—as that other traveller drew closer about him the folds of his cloak the more bitterly the winds and the storm assailed him on his way. But, as with him, when the sun shone upon him in his path, his cloak fell from his shoulders, so I, in the warm glow of your friendship, throw from me all former disguise, and, making no further attempt to hide my true feeling, disclose to you my deep emotion at such unwonted testimony of affection and faith."

This was the only public testimonial he ever received in England, and one of the few public functions at which he assisted. He seldom attended public dinners, those solemn feasts of funeral baked meats by which "the Islander soothes his conscience and purchases public approval." We remember that he did not appear at the first dinner of the Society of Authors, where his place was beside ours—a dinner given to American authors, at which Lowell presided. He rarely, if ever, was seen in the City, and rarely was asked in Paris. As an outsider, he was never invited to the Academy. Even little private functions, like the Johnson Club, to which J. has taken him, he did not care for. We know how easy it is to be bored, how difficult to be amused, on all such occasions. He preferred not to run the risk.

Of the gentle answer that turneth not away wrath, 1889 was full of examples. At the Universal Exhibition in Paris, Whistler, an American, naturally proposed to show with Americans. *Lady Archibald Campbell* and *The Balcony*

LITHOGRAPH

were the pictures he selected ; he sent twenty-seven etchings, knowing that, in a big exhibition, a few prints make no effect. The first official acknowledgment was a printed notice from General Rush C. Hawkins, " Cavalry Officer," Commissioner for the American Art Department :

> " Sir,—Ten of your exhibits have not received the approval of the jury. Will you kindly remove them ? "

Whistler's answer was an immediate journey to Paris, a call on General Hawkins, the peremptory withdrawal of all his prints and pictures, to the General's embarrassment. Whistler wrote afterwards to the *New York Herald,* the Paris Edition :

> " Had I been properly advised that the room was less than the demand for place, I would, of course, have instantly begged the gentlemen of the jury to choose, from among the number, what etchings they pleased."

Twenty-seven etchings, unless specially invited, were rather a large number to send to any exhibition where space is limited. He had been already asked to contribute to the British Section, and to it he now took the two pictures and some of the prints. Though General Hawkins' action is as incomprehensible as his appointment to such a post, Whistler made a mistake. There is no doubt that, had his seventeen accepted prints remained in the American Section, he would have had a much better show than in the English, where, for etching Seymour Haden, and not Whistler, carried off the honours.

" Whistler's Grievance " got into the papers. He explained the situation in the *Pall Mall* at the time—April 27, 1889. Months after, the subject was revived. An interview with him was published in the Paris Edition of the *New York Herald,* October 3, 1889. General Hawkins answered by means of an interview for the next day's *Herald.*

Whistler wrote from Amsterdam. Letters and interviews remain in *The Gentle Art.* Since his death, the affair has been used as a reproach against him. He pretended to despise the English, it is said, but in an International Exhibition, before the whole world, he " preferred " to be represented in the British Section. If in 1889 he identified himself with the British, it was due solely to the discourtesy, as he considered it, of his countrymen. There was no denial of his own nationality.

When Whistler left the British Artists, in 1888, there was not a society in England with whom he had the right to exhibit. The New Gallery had taken over the played-out traditions of the Grosvenor, but he did not follow to Regent Street. His *Carlyle,* several drawings, and many etchings went to the Glasgow Exhibition that year, and he was well represented at the first Pastel Exhibition at the Grosvenor. He was more in sympathy with the New English Art Club than any other group of artists. It was then in its first youth and enthusiasm, most of the younger men of promise or talent belonged, and it might have accomplished great things, had its founders carried out their original ambition. Whistler was never a member, but he sent a *White Note* and the etching of the *Grande Place, Brussels,* to the exhibition in 1888, and *Rose and Red,* a pastel, in 1889, when he was elected by the votes of the exhibitors to the jury. To the infinite loss of the Club, his connection with it then ceased. This same year (1889), at the Institute of the Fine Arts at Glasgow, *The Mother* strengthened the impression made by the *Carlyle* the year before; there was a show of his work at the College for Working Women in Queen Square, London; and a picture difficult to identify, entitled *The Grey Lady,* was included in an exhibition at the Art Institute, Chicago.

The show at Queen Square was remarkable. There had not been anywhere such a representative collection of his

ANNABEL LEE

(*Pastel*)

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work since his own exhibition of 1874. *The Mother, Carlyle, Rosa Corder, Irving* were there, many pastels and water-colours, and many etchings of all periods from the Thames series to the last in Touraine and Belgium. We remember how it impressed us when we came to the fine old Queen Anne house in the quiet, out-of-the-way Square, how indignant we were to find nobody there but one solitary man and the young lady at the desk, and how urgently we wrote in the *Star* that, if there were as many as half a dozen people who cared for good work, they should go at once to see this exhibition of "the man who has done more to influence artists than any modern." There is a legend of Whistler's coming one day, taking a picture from the wall, and walking off with it, despite the protest of the attendant and the Principal of the College, wishing, so the legend goes, to carry out the theory he was soon to assert that pictures were "only kindly lent their owners." But the story of his running off with it across the Square, followed by the College staff screaming "Stop thief," and being nearly run in by a policeman, is a poor invention. His desire, however, to keep his pictures in his own possession, his hope that those who bought them would keep them, was growing, and his disgust when they were sold, especially if at increased prices, was well expressed in his answer to a friend who said: "Staats Forbes tells me that that picture of yours he has will be the last picture he will ever part with." "H'm," said Whistler, who had had later news, "it is the last picture he has."

In March 1890, Whistler moved to No. 21 Cheyne Walk, a beautiful old house, with a garden at the back, further down the Embankment than Lindsey Row, and close to Rossetti's Tudor House. It was panelled from the street door to the very top. A cool scheme of blue and white decorated the dining-room, where there was always one perfect painting over the mantel, and, Mr. Francis James

has told us, the *Six Projects* hung for a while on the walls. The drawing-room on the first floor was turned into a studio, there was a beautiful bedroom above, and the rest of the house was empty and bare. M. Gérard Harry, who, whenever in London at this period, saw much of Whistler, writes us :

> " Whistler was certainly a delightful man, besides being an artistic genius. It always seemed to me that his lavish wit begat wit all around him. To hear him was to drink sparkling champagne, and he lit others' brains with his own light. I remember a striking remark of his, at a garden-party in his Chelsea house. As he caught me observing some incompletely furnished rooms and questioning within myself whether he had occupied the house more than a fortnight or so : ' You see,' he said, with his short laugh, ' I do not care for definitely settling down anywhere. Where there is no more space for improvement, or dreaming about improvement, where mystery is in perfect shape, it is *finis*—the end—death. There is no hope, nor outlook left.' I do not vouch for the words, but that was certainly the sense of a remark which struck me as offering a key to much of Whistler's philosophy, and to one aspect of his original art."

On September 24, 1890, Mr. Alan S. Cole, calling at Cheyne Walk, " found him painting some excellent half and quarter-length portraits—very strong and fine." What these were, it is now difficult to say, though one probably was the well-known *Harmony in Black and Gold, Comte Robert de Montesquiou-Fezensac,* Whistler's fourth portrait of a man in evening dress. Another may have been the second portrait which was never finished, but which Montesquiou described to Edmund de Goncourt, according to a note in his *Journal* for July 7, 1891 :

> " Montesquiou tells me that Whistler is now doing two portraits of him : one is in evening dress, with a fur cloak under his arm, the other in a great grey cloak with high collar, at his neck, just suggested, a necktie of a mauve not to be put into words, though his eyes express the ideal colour of it. And Montesquiou is most

interesting to listen to as he explains the method of painting of Whistler, to whom he gave seventeen sittings during a month spent in London. The first sketching-in of his subject is with Whistler a fury, a passion: one or two hours of this wild fever, and the subject emerges, complete in its envelope. Then, sittings, long sittings, when most of the time, the brush is brought close to the canvas, but does not touch it, is thrown away, and another taken, and sometimes in three hours, not more than fifty touches are given to the canvas—every touch, according to Whistler, lifting a veil from the sketch."

"Oh, sittings! when it seemed to Montesquiou that Whistler, by that intentness of observation, was draining from him his life, something of his individuality, and, in the end, he was so exhausted, that he felt as if all his being was shrinking away, but, happily, he discovered a certain *vin de coca* that restored him after those terrible sittings."

J. went only once to No. 21 Cheyne Walk. Then it was to consult Whistler concerning Sir Hubert von Herkomer's publication, *An Idyl*, in which photogravure reproductions of pen-drawings were issued as etchings. Whistler received J. in the white-panelled dining-room, where he was breakfasting on an egg. He felt that the results of such a confusion of terms might be serious to the etcher, he was indignant of course, and he lent his support to W. E. Henley, who was editing the *National Observer* and who had taken up the matter in that paper. The excitement throughout was great, and the newspaper discussion as lively as the reputation of Henley's weekly. Whistler's interest never slackened. From this time J. saw him oftener, meeting him in clubs, in galleries, in friend's houses, or rooms, occasionally at Solferino's, the little restaurant in Rupert Street, which was for several years the meeting-place, a club really, for the staff of the *Scots*, especially after it was changed to the *National, Observer*. Nobody who ever went there to lunch on press day at the Academy, or the New English Art Club, or the New Gallery, is likely to forget the talk round the table in the corner. Never have we

heard R. A. M.—" Bob "—Stevenson more brilliant, more paradoxical, more inspiriting than at these mid-day gatherings. Whistler's first encounter with Henley's paper, then edited in Edinburgh, was a sharp skirmish, which, though he afterwards became friendly with Henley, he never quite forgot nor forgave. Henley was publishing a series of articles called *Modern Men*, among whom he included Whistler, " the Yankee with the methods of Barnum." The policy of the *National Observer* was to fight, everybody, everything, and it must be said that it fought with great spirit. But it had no patience with the battles of others. Of Whistler the artist, it approved, but not of Whistler the writer of letters, whom it pronounced rowdy and unpleasant. " Malvolio-Macaire " was the name for him it often repeated. At last, in noticing Sheridan Ford's *Gentle Art*, of which we shall presently have more to say, it continued in the same strain, and a copy of the paper containing the review, " with proud mark, in the blue pencil of office," was sent to Whistler. He answered promptly with a laugh at " the thick thumb of your editorial refinement " pointed " in depreciation of my choice rowdyism." Two things came of the letter—one, amusing; the other, a better understanding. Whistler's answer finished with a " regret that the ridiculous ' Romeike ' has not hitherto sent me your agreeable literature." Romeike objected; he had sent eight hundred and seven clippings to Whistler: he demanded an apology. Whistler gave it without hesitation: he had never thought of Romeike as a person, and, he wrote, " if it be not actionable, permit me to say that you really are delightful ! ! " No one could appreciate the wit, the fun of it all better than Henley, and he was the more eager to meet Whistler. His account of the meeting, when it came about, was coloured by the enthusiasm that made Henley the stimulating person he was. " And we met," he would say, throwing back his great head and laughing with joy, though he gave no

details of the interview. Henley always managed to find "the earnest of romance" in everything that happened to him. "And there we were—Whistler and I—together!" he would repeat, as if it were the most dramatic situation ever imagined.

The bond between them was their love for the Thames. Henley was the first to sing that special beauty of the river which Whistler was the first to paint. He could see its loveliness in the midsummer night when it was "a tangle of silver gleams and dusky lights," or its mystery

> "Under a stagnant sky,
> Gloom out of gloom uncoiling into gloom;"

and when he wrote the verses (No. XIII. in *Rhymes and Rhythms*) that gave the very feeling, the magical charm of the Nocturnes—

> "What of the incantation
> That forced the huddled shapes on yonder shore
> To take and wear the night
> Like a material majesty?
> That touched the shafts of wavering fire
> About this miserable welter and wash—
> (River, O River of Journeys, River of Dreams!)—
> Into long, shining signals from the panes
> Of an enchanted pleasure-house" . . .

he dedicated them to Whistler. Big and splendid as a Viking, exuberant, emphatic, Henley was not, however, the type physically to interest Whistler. The sketch of him (made in 1896) is one of Whistler's least satisfactory lithographs, and only six impressions were pulled. But their relations were always cordial, and when the *National Observer* was transferred to London, and Henley returned with it, Whistler sometimes came to the dinners of the staff at Solferino's. Henley had gathered about him the younger literary men and journalists of promise: Rudyard Kipling, "Bob" Stevenson, J. M. Barrie, Marriott Watson, G. S. Street,

Vernon Blackburn, Fitzmaurice Kelly, Arthur Morrison, Charles Whibley, Kenneth Graham, George W. Steevens. After Mr. Astor bought the *Pall Mall Gazette*, its staff was largely recruited from the *National Observer*, and Mr. Henry Cust, the editor, and Mr. Ivan-Muller the assistant-editor, joined the group in the room upstairs. When dinner was all over and Henley, in his usual fashion, was thundering on the table, the rest listening, Whistler occasionally dropped in, and the contrast between him and Henley added to the entertainment of those memorable evenings: Henley, the "Burly" of Stevenson's essay on *Talk and Talkers*, who would "roar you down . . . bury his face in his hands . . . undergo passions of revolt and agony;" Whistler, who would interpose the telling word, let fly the shaft of wit lightly, whose eloquent hands emphasised it with delicate, graceful gesture, whose "Ha, ha!" rose gaily above Henley's boisterous intolerance. When "Bob" Stevenson was there—"Spring-Heel'd Jack"—the entertainment was complete. But each of the three talked his best when he held the floor and we have known Whistler far more brilliant when dining quietly alone with us. From Solferino's, at a late hour when Henley, as always in his lameness, had been helped to his cab, Whistler and J. would retire with "Bob" Stevenson and a little group to the Savile, where everything under Heaven was discussed by them, Professor Walter Raleigh, Reginald Blomfield and Charles Furse frequently joining them, and they rarely left until the club was closed. Whistler would, in his turn, be seen to his cab on his way home, and a smaller group would listen to "Bob" between Piccadilly and Westminster Bridge, waiting for him to catch the first morning train to Kew.

Whistler seldom left without some parting shot which his friends remembered, though he was apparently unconscious of the effect of these bewildering little sayings of his as he

returned to his house in Cheyne Walk. There, he was often followed by his new friends and often visited by the few "artists" he had not cared to lose, especially Mr. Francis James and Mr. Theodore Roussel. A few Followers also continued to flutter at his heels. Portraits of some of those who came to 21 Cheyne Walk, are in the lithograph of *The Garden :* Mr. Walter Sickert, Mr. Sidney Starr, Mr. and Mrs. Brandon Thomas. Mr. Walter Sickert had married Miss Ellen Cobden, and she was a constant visitor. So also were Henry Harland, later on editor of the *Yellow Book*, Wolcot Balestier, the enterprising youth who set out to "corner" the literature of the world, and who, with Mr. S. S. McClure, was bent on syndicating everybody, including Whistler ; Miss Carrie Balestier. now Mrs. Rudyard Kipling ; an American journalist called Haxton with a stammer which Whistler adored to the point of borrowing it on occasions, though he never could manage the last stage when words that refused to be spoken had to be spelled. Another was André Raffalovitch, the Russian youth and poet, whose receptions brought together many of the most amusing as well as fantastic elements of London society. But the most intimate friend he made at this period was Mr. William Heinemann, and this brings us to the great event of 1890, the publication of *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies.*

CHAPTER XXXIV. "THE GENTLE ART." THE YEAR EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND NINETY

FOR years, Whistler's letters to the papers puzzled the crowd. George Moore accounted for them in *Modern Painting* by an elaborate theory of physical feebleness, and this has been taken seriously even in France and America. One glimpse of Whistler at the printing press, sleeves rolled up showing two strong arms, and the theory would have been knocked out. The letters were not an eccentricity; they were not a weakness. From the first, written to the *Athenæum* in 1862, they had but one aim—"to make history." Buried in the papers, they were lost; if the history were to be made they must be collected. They were collected and edited in *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies as Pleasingly Exemplified in Many Instances, Wherein the Serious Ones of This Earth, Carefully Exasperated, Have Been Prettily Spurred On to Unseemliness and Indiscretion, While Overcome by an Undue Sense of Right.*

The book born of years of fighting, was ushered into the world by a fight. The work of collecting and arranging the letters was at first undertaken by Mr. Sheridan Ford, an American journalist in London. Whistler said that Ford only helped him. Ford said that the idea was his, that he, with Whistler's approval, was collecting and editing the letters for a publication of his own. We give Ford's side of the story by one who followed it at the time, Mr. J. McLure Hamilton, and this we are better pleased to do because Whistler misunder-

L'AMERICAINE

(Arrangement in Black and White, No. I.)

stood Mr. Hamilton's part in the matter, and credited him with a malice and enmity that few men could be so utterly incapable of as he. Whistler would not consent to meet him in later years, and never understood why we should not agree in his view of Mr. Hamilton as "a dangerous person." By accident, they nevertheless did meet in our flat. Whistler was dining with us, Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton called in the evening. Other people were there, and they simply ignored one another. Chance had blundered in its choice of the moment for the meeting.

The following is Mr. Hamilton's account of Sheridan Ford's part in *The Gentle Art,* and we cannot help suspecting that Whistler would have felt the unfairness of his judgment of Mr. Hamilton's conduct in the matter, could he have read it :

"In the spring of 1889, I met Mr. and Mrs. Sheridan Ford. Sheridan Ford was writing notices for the *New York Herald,* and Mrs. Sheridan Ford had been interesting picture-dealers in the work of such men as Swan, Clausen, Melville and others. Ford had a very strong inborn taste for art, and seemed to be conscientiously opposed to all forms of trickery, and was engaged at that time on a series of articles, which appeared almost daily in the columns of the *New York Herald* (London Edition), upon Whistler and his work. He was also the author of *Art, a Commodity,* a pamphlet widely read both in England and America. He came to me one day, and told me of an idea that he thought could be carried out with advantage both to himself and Whistler. He suggested that the letters which Whistler had been publishing from time to time in the press, in answer to the defamation of his critics, could be brought together, edited, and published in book form. The title was naturally to be *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies.* The title, I understood, was Ford's. Whistler and he had talked the matter over, and it was agreed between them that Ford should collect the letters, edit them with some remarks of his own, and publish the book for his own profit.

"The work went on for some months, and occasionally Ford would bring me some of the letters that he had unearthed from the newspaper files at the British Museum, to read. I was not

acquainted with Whistler, but from what Ford told me, I understood that Whistler was as much interested in the progress of this book as Ford. The latter seemed to be looking forward, with great eagerness, to the production of a book which could not fail to amuse the art world.

" One morning Ford came to me at Alpha House in great distress. He brought with him a letter from Whistler requesting him to discontinue the making of the book, and containing a cheque for ten pounds in payment for the trouble that he had had in collecting the materials. The book at that time was almost complete, and the preface written. After a prolonged talk with him upon all the bearings of the case, I concluded that Whistler's change of mind had been determined by the discovery that there would be too much credit and profit lost to him if he allowed Ford to bring out the work, and that probably Mrs. Whistler had suggested to Whistler that it would be a great gain to him if he were to issue the letters himself. Ford asked me what I would advise him to do. I replied that I, personally, would not go on with the book, but that if he were careful to omit *all copyright matter*, he would be perfectly justified in continuing, after having, of course returned the cheque to Whistler. I have no doubt that Ford asked the advice of others, for soon he brought me the advanced proofs to read, and I spent a great deal of time going over them, and sometimes suggesting alterations and improvements. Soon after this I and my family left London for South Wales. A note from Ford reached me there telling me that the book was finished, and asking my permission to dedicate it to me. I wrote, in reply, that I did not wish the work dedicated to me, as it was a jest book, and for other reasons of my own. Ford found a good publisher (you will remember the name), who evidently was willing to undertake the publication of the work, and, as far as I could see, everything was going on satisfactorily, when one morning Ford called to see me and told me that Whistler had discovered the printer, and had threatened to proceed against him if he did not immediately destroy the sheets, and he (Whistler) found and seized the first sewn-up copy (or leaves) with my name on the dedication page, in spite of the refusal I had given.

" This brought, at once, a letter from Whistler to me, in which he abruptly accused me of assisting Ford in wronging him. I replied in a few words, denying his allegations. At this interview, Ford's manner was very strange, and for several weeks after he

was confined to his house ill, a very natural consequence of seeing all his hopes shattered. He had foreseen in the successful production of *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies* the opening of a happy and profitable career in letters. After his recovery, Mr. and Mrs. Ford went away, pursued by the relentless activity of Whistler. In the end, the so-called 'pirated edition,' paper-bound, appeared in Mechlin * or some other continental city, and was more or less clandestinely offered for sale in England. Whistler's handsome volume appeared almost simultaneously.

"While these incidents were progressing, I was asked to dine at the Hogarth Club, and it had evidently been pre-arranged that I should meet Whistler after dinner in the smoking-room. This was my first introduction to the great master. We talked Art and commonplace, but he never touched upon the subject of the book, and as I was quite sure the meeting had been arranged in order that he might discuss with me Ford's conduct, I could not understand his silence. Our next meeting was at a *conversazione* held at the Grosvenor Galleries, when we both freely discussed together the whole question before Melville, who was displeased at the attitude I took with Whistler. I frankly told him that I thought he had done Ford a great wrong in withdrawing the editorship of the book which rightly belonged to him."

Sheridan Ford persisted in his contention that Whistler had conferred on him the right to publish the collection, and he announced the simultaneous publication of his book in England and America. Sir George Lewis stopped it in both countries. The English publishers, Messrs. Field and Tuer, of the Leadenhall Press, had supposed that Ford was acting for Whistler when he brought the MSS. for them to publish. The text was set up and cast, the type being distributed; they were ready to print when they discovered their mistake. "We then sent for the person in question," they wrote to Messrs. Lewis and Lewis, "and told him that until he obtained Mr. Whistler's sanction, we declined to proceed further with the work."

Sheridan Ford went to Antwerp, and had the book printed

* It was printed in Antwerp, not Mechlin.

there. Sir George Lewis followed, and seized the edition at the printers' on the day of publication, when vans for its distribution were at their door. The two thousand copies printed were carried off instead by the *Procureur du Roi*. The matter came before the Belgian Courts in October 1891, M. Edmond Picard and *Maître* Maeterlinck, cousin of Maeterlinck the poet, appearing for Whistler. M. Harry, of the *Indépendance Belge*, described Whistler in the witness-box, with the eyes of a Mephistopheles, flashing and sparkling under the thick eyebrows, his manner easy and gay, his French fluent and perfect. He was asked his religion, and hesitated. The Judge, thinking to help him, suggested, " A Protestant, perhaps ? " His answer was a little shrug, as much as to say, " I am quite willing. You should know. As you choose ! " He was asked his age—even the Belgian reporter respected his objection to having any. Judgment was given for him. Sheridan Ford was sentenced to a fine of five hundred francs, or three months' imprisonment ; to three thousand francs damages, or three months more ; to the confiscation of the two thousand copies, and to all costs. After the trial Whistler was taken down to the cellars of the Palais de Justice, and shown the confiscated copies, stored there with other fraudulent goods, by the law of Belgium destined to perish in the dampness and gloom.

The affair has not yet been forgotten in Belgium—nor has Whistler. One impression has been written for us by M. Edmond Picard, the distinguished Senator, his advocate :

" *En me demandant de parler de l'illustre et regretté Whistler, vous ne désirez certes pas que j'ajoute mon lot à la riche pyramide d'admiration et d'éloges définitivement erigée à sa gloire.*

" *Il ne peut s'agir, dans votre pensée que de ce que je pourrais ajouter de spécial et de pittoresque à la Biographie du Grand Artiste.*

" *Si j'ai beaucoup vu et aimé ses œuvres, je n'ai qu'entrevu son originale personne.*

" *Voici deux traits intéressants qui s'y rapportent.*

DIEPPE

"Il y a quelques années il s'inquiéta d'une contrefaçon qu'un étranger habitant Anvers avait perpétré en Belgique de son curieux livre 'L'Art charmant de se faire des ennemis.' Je le vis un jour entrer dans mon cabinet et il me dit avec un sourire sarcastique. 'Je souhaiterais que vous fussiez mon avocat dans cette petite affaire parcequ'on m'a dit que vous pratiquez aussi bien que moi l'art charmant de se faire des ennemis.'

"Le procès fut gagné à Anvers avec la collaboration de mon confrère, M. Maeterlinck, parent du poète qui honore tant notre pays. On célébra chez lui cette victoire. Quand Whistler, héros de la fête, arriva dans l'hospitalière maison, il s'attardait dans l'antichambre. La bonne qui l'avait reçu vint, avec quelque effarement, dire en flamand au salon où l'on attendait, 'Madame, c'est un acteur; il se coiffe devant le miroir, il se pommade, il se met du fard et de la poudre!' Après un assez long intervalle, Whistler parut, courtois, correct, ciré, cosmétiqué, pimpant comme le papillon que rappèle son nom et qu'il mit en signature, sur quelques uns des billets qu'il écrivit alors à ses conseils.

"Et voilà tout ce que je puis vous offrir.

"J'ai demandé à M. Maeterlinck les documents qu'il pouvait avoir conservés de cet épisode judiciaire. Ses recherches ont été vaines. Alors que d'innombrables pièces insignifiantes ont été conservées, le Hasard 'qui se permet tout' a fait disparaître ces précieuses épaves."

The "Extraordinary Piratical Plot," as Whistler called it in *The Gentle Art*, did not end in Antwerp. Sheridan Ford took the book to Paris, had it printed there with the name of Frederick Stokes and Brother of New York on the title-page. Copies through the post reached England, some sent to newspapers for review, some to individuals, supposed to be interested. Sir George Lewis saw that no further copies passed the Customs. Messrs. Stokes cabled from New York that their name was used without their permission. In June 1890, a so-called "second edition" was received by some papers. But that was the last heard of it, and Sheridan Ford's book was killed.

Once Whistler took up the work, he spared himself no pains

to perfect it. His concern was not only for the selection of material, all of which, except a few comments and "reflections," had already been published, but for the appearance the book should have, the impression it should make. Mr. Heinemann published it, and it was the time of preparation for press that drew the two men together. Whistler, as he always said, was delighted with Heinemann's artistic instinct, sympathy, enthusiasm, and quick appreciation of his intention. From the day their agreement was signed, the publisher entered into the matter with all his heart. Whistler's fights were his fights, Whistler's victories his victories. Whistler was flattered also with the intuitive understanding he found, and drove down daily almost to take out his "publisher, philosopher and friend," as he described Mr. Heinemann, to breakfast at the Savoy. He arrived at eleven, when the business man had hardly got into the swing of his morning's work, and carried him off whether he would or no. Was it not preposterous that there should be other books to be prepared? other matters to be thought of while this great work of art was being born? The balcony overlooking the Embankment was, so long before the customary London hour, deserted, and there they could go over, discuss, change and arrange every little detail without interruption. Hours were spent often in the "arranging" of a single Butterfly, and usually Whistler came down with his pockets full of gay and fantastic entomological drawings.

Whistler was constantly at the Ballantyne Press, where the book was printed. He chose the type, he spaced the text, he placed the Butterflies, each of which he designed especially to convey a special meaning. They danced, laughed, mocked, stung, defied, triumphed, drooped wings over the farthing damages, spread them to fly across the Channel, and expressed every word and almost every thought. He designed the title-page; a design contrary to all established rules, but

with the charm, the balance, the harmony, the touch of personality he gave to everything, and since copied and prostituted by foolish imitators who had no conception of its purpose. The cover was in the now inevitable brown, with a yellow back. The title, though attributed to Sheridan Ford, can be traced to Whistler's speech at the Criterion dinner, and to the gentle answer that turneth not away wrath. The dedication is: "To the rare Few, who, early in Life, have rid Themselves of the Friendship of the Many, these pathetic Papers are inscribed."

The book was published in June 1890, and went through several editions. First, Messrs. John M. Lovell and Co., and then Messrs. Putnam's Sons, taking it over in America. It met the fate of all his works. The press received it with the usual smile at Mr. Whistler's eccentricities, and here and there a word of praise and appreciation said with more assurance than of old. To the multitude of readers, it was a jest; to a "saving remnant," it was serious, though to none more serious than to Whistler, who believed it would live with the writings of Cennini and Cellini, of Dürer and Leonardo, of Reynolds and Fromentin.

The book is really an artistic autobiography. Whistler gave the sub-title *Auto-Biographical* to one section, he might have given it to the volume. He had a way, half-laughing, half-serious, of calling it his Bible. "Well, you know, you have only to look and there it all is in the Bible," or "I am afraid you do not know the Bible as you should," he often said to us in answer to some question about his work or his experiences as artist. He was right; "it" all is there, if "it" means his belief in art and his steadfast adherence to this belief. The trial, the pamphlets, the letters, the catalogues take their place and appear in their proper relation to each other as one long deliberate sequence, instead of the independent, inconsequent little squibs and

the elaborate bids for notoriety they were supposed to be. *The Gentle Art* may be read with pleasure for its wit alone. But it is much more than a jest book. The collection begins with the reprint of the Ruskin trial, which was his brave effort to fight the battles of artists against critics, though few have yet grasped the fact that he was fighting not only for himself but for all artists. It contains his two serious essays : *Whistler* v. *Ruskin, Art and Art Critics,* written in order that the meaning of the trial might not be missed, and the *Ten o'Clock,* first delivered as a lecture in order that the dignity of art might be upheld. The several shorter *Propositions* are included, for these were his statements, in a few vigorous words, of the technical principles upon which his practice as artist was based—upon which he believed all art practice should be based. His letters were gathered together because, light, witty, " wicked," as they seemed, many were records of episodes he thought important, while scarcely one is without some underlying truth he wished to express even if it remained undiscovered by his contemporaries in their conviction of his levity. Finally, he reprinted the *Catalogue* of the Exhibition of Etchings at the Fine Art Society's in 1883 for no other than the reason already set forth in the motto, " Out of their own mouths shall ye judge them." To this, the *Catalogue* of the Goupil Exhibition of 1892 was added in the third edition of *The Gentle Art,* which he helped to prepare, though it did not appear until after his death. His object was to expose for all time the stupidity and ridicule which he was obliged to face, so that his method of defence should be the better understood.

The book makes us wonder the more that there should have been necessity for defence, so simple and right is his theory of art, so sincere and reverent his attitude as artist. We have spoken of most of the different writings as they appeared. The collection intensifies the effect each made individually.

SOUTHAMPTON WATER
(*Nocturne, Blue and Gold*)

Everything he wrote had the same end: to show that art is to be considered and respected and loved as art, that the artist's sole pre-occupation is with beauty and the means of interpreting it with his brush, his pencil, or his needle.

> "Art should be independent of all clap-trap—should stand alone, and appeal to the artistic sense of eye or ear, without confounding this with emotions entirely foreign to it, as devotion, pity, love, patriotism, and the like. All these have no kind of concern with it, and that is why I insist on calling my works 'arrangements' and 'harmonies.'"

It was for the "knowledge of a life-time," his work was to be valued, he told the Attorney-General in court. In this paragraph, and in this answer, you have the key to *The Gentle Art*. Fault may be found with argument; facts and methods may be challenged. But analysis, description, technical statement and explanation, all lead to the one great truth of the independence of art and the entire devotion the "goddess" demands of her disciples.

It would seem impossible that the statement of a simple truth should have been suspected and misjudged, were it not remembered that art in England depended mostly on "clap-trap" when Whistler wrote, and that his manner of meeting suspicion was intended to bewilder and mystify. He took care that his book should be the expression not only of his belief, but of the artlessness of the prevailing conception of art, the tendency to confuse it with morals, or sentiment, or anecdote. Stupidity in critics and public hurt him as much as insincerity in artists, and when confronted with it, he was pitiless. It was dulness he could not stand. He met it with what he called "joyousness:" to be "joyous" was his philosophy of life and art, "where all is fair," and this philosophy to the multitude proved an enigma. His letters to the press are apt to be dismissed as shrill, cheap, thin, not worthy a great artist, still unworthier of his endeavour to

immortalise them. It is true that he might more wisely have omitted some things from *The Gentle Art.* It was, after all, not very witty at the time when he bade Oscar Wilde put off "the combined costumes of Kossuth and Mr. Mantalini," and the wit has quite evaporated when we read the light jest to-day. And so it is with some of his chaffing of 'Arry and "the Kangaroo," some of his "spurring on" of "the serious ones," though it should be added that his lightest jests told and that the names and ridicule he found for the "Enemies" stuck to them for ever after. But, on the other hand, Whistler thought "history" would be half-made, if he did not leave on record, with the provocation he received, his own gaiety of retaliation. This is shown by the fact that, when the battle was won and recognition came, he wrote to Atlas from Paris: "we 'collect' no more," and *Messieurs les Ennemis* had no longer to fear for their 'scalps.' Oftener than not, however, the wit is delicately polished or cruel in its sting. We have already quoted the letter to Hamerton, where he asks if "this wise person" expected a symphony in F to be a "continued repetition of F.F.F. . . . Fool!" There are letters still more bitter, because gayer on the surface, to Tom Taylor, as, for instance, that final disposing of him:

> "Why, my dear old Tom, I never *was* serious with you, even when you were among us. Indeed, I killed you quite, as who should say, without seriousness, 'A rat! A rat!' you know, rather cursorily."

Almost all abound in witty phrases, such as his description of the trial as an "Arrangement in Frith, Jones, *Punch* and Ruskin, with a touch of Titian," or his explanation when, in the quotation from Mr. Wedmore given in his catalogue, *understand* was printed for *understate:* "with Mr. Wedmore, as with his brethren, it is always a matter of understating, and not at all one of understanding." The titles for his

letters are as witty: *An Apology* for this very letter in which the misprint is explained so pleasantly to Mr. Wedmore, *Early Laurels*, for the letter proclaiming the compliment of hisses paid to his Nocturne when produced at the Graham sale. But only by quoting straight through the book, from cover to cover, could justice be done to the quality of its wit.

Whistler's wit, like his more serious sayings, told, because he had the power of expressing himself in words, which is so rare with artists in other mediums. He could write, he had style, as we said in speaking of the *Ten o'Clock*. Literature, no less than art, was to him a "dainty goddess." He rounded out his shortest letter, as carefully as a portrait or a nocturne, until all trace of labour in finishing it had disappeared. This was one reason why people, awed by the spectacle of Ruskin labouring through the many volumes of *Modern Painters* without succeeding in the end in saying what he wanted, could not believe that Whistler was seriously saying anything that mattered in a few pages showing no sign of labour at all. In his little notes to *Truth* and the *World*, as in the *Ten o'Clock*, he reveals the influence of his close familiarity with the Scriptures, while his use of French phrases which displeased his critics, his odd references, his unexpected quotations, are all placed with the same unerring instinct as the Butterfly on his canvas. He always chose the right word, he made even the division of paragraphs effective, punctuation was with him an art in itself. It is difficult to give examples, because there is so much good writing in *The Gentle Art*. The *Ten o'Clock* is full of passages that show him as writer at his best, from his account of the creation of the artist to his summing up of the beautiful, none finer than the often-quoted description of London "when the evening mist clothes the riverside with poetry, as with a veil." The *Propositions* and *The Red Rag* are as complete within their limits, as simple and direct in

expression as his prints. The book, in a word, has literary charm; as a serious exposition of an artist's beliefs and doctrines, it can rank with Reynolds' lectures; as a chronicle of an artist's adventures, it is as personal and characteristic in its way as the *Memoirs of Cellini*.

The period of the preparation and publication of *The Gentle Art* was one of small, unimportant quarrels. In each case, there was provocation. Of one or two, so much was made at the time, that they cannot be ignored. One, in 1888, was with Mr. Menpes, who, making no secret of it, has recorded its various stages until the last, when the Follower adapted the "Master's" decorations and arrangements to his own house. His *Home of Taste* was paragraphed in the papers, and Whistler held him up to the world's ridicule as "the Kangaroo of his country, born with a pocket and putting everything into it." The affair came to a crisis not long after the *Times*' Parnell disclosures, and Whistler wrote to him:

> "You will blow your brains out, of course. Pigott has shown you what to do under the circumstances, and you know your way to Spain. Good-bye."

Once afterwards, at a public dinner, Whistler saw Mr. Menpes come into the room on Mr. Justin McCarthy's arm: "Ha! ha! McCarthy," he laughed as they passed him, "Ha! ha! You should be careful. You know—Damien died."

In 1890, Augustus Moore, brother of George, never a friend, was added to the list of "Enemies." The cause was an offensive reference to Godwin, Mrs. Whistler's first husband, in *The Hawk*, an insignificant sheet Moore then edited. Whistler, knowing that he would find him at any first night, went to Drury Lane for the "autumn production," and, in the foyer hit Moore with a cane across the face, crying, "Hawk! Hawk!" There was a scrimmage, and Whistler, as the man who attacked, was requested to leave the house.

The whole thing was the outcome of that nice sense of honour, that feeling of chivalry, which was never understood in England, though even there it would have been found magnificent in the days of duels. The comic papers made great fun of the episode, and the "serious ones" lamented the want of dignity it showed. No one could understand the loyalty that was carried to such extremes in his devotion to the woman he loved.

CHAPTER XXXV. THE TURN OF THE TIDE. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN NINETY-ONE TO EIGHTEEN NINETY-TWO

THE world owed him a living, Whistler always said, but it was not until 1891 and 1892 that the world began to pay off the debt. The battles, of which *The Gentle Art* is the record, were over. The medals and decorations of 1888 and 1889 were signs of the change which began with the purchase of the *Carlyle* for Glasgow, and *The Mother* for the Luxembourg in 1891.

It was almost twenty years since Whistler first exhibited the two pictures, and they were still his property. The *Carlyle* had been returned to him from the Glasgow Institute in 1888, as from previous exhibitions. But a younger generation had arisen in Scotland. The Glasgow School was beginning to be heard of and was becoming a power. Three great influences in their development were, according to their own profession, Whistler, the Japanese, and William M'Taggart, and the greatest of these was Whistler. Mr. E. A. Walton and Mr. (now Sir) James Guthrie determined to secure the *Carlyle* for Glasgow, and they were more successful than Mr. Halkett had been in Edinburgh. Mr. Walton, on January 12, 1891, wrote to Whistler, that he was preparing a petition to be presented to the Glasgow Corporation, urging the purchase of the *Carlyle* for the City Gallery, and asking if it was still for sale. It was, Whistler answered (January 19), and though he had just been approached by an American, he would reserve the picture for Glasgow. Mr. Walton then wrote asking the

price, and enclosing a copy of the petition. Whistler answered (February 3) that he was honoured and flattered; that the price would be, as in 1888, one thousand guineas; that he was pleased to find the names of Orchardson and Gilbert on the memorial, which was signed also by a third Royal Academician, Millais, and a long list of Scotch artists. The appeal to the Corporation was successful, and from Glasgow came the first public recognition of Whistler's pictures in Great Britain, the first official demand for one of his pictures anywhere.

Whistler was prepared by the Secretary for the visit of a deputation from the Council.

> "I received them, well, you know, charmingly, of course. And one who spoke for the rest asked me if I did not think I was putting a large price on the picture—one thousand guineas. And I said, 'Yes, perhaps, if you will have it so!' And he said that it seemed to the Council excessive; why, the figure was not even life-size. And I agreed. 'But, you know,' I said, 'few men are life-size.' And that was all. It was an official occasion, and I respected it. Then they asked me to think over the matter until the next day, and they would come again. And they came. And they said, 'Have you thought of the thousand guineas and what we said about it, Mr. Whistler?' And I said, 'Why, gentlemen, why—well, you know, how could I think of anything but the pleasure of seeing you again?' And naturally, being gentlemen, they understood, and they gave me a cheque for the thousand guineas."

What Whistler thought of the "life-size" portrait, he had first told the public through Mr. Walter Dowdeswell four years before (1887):

> "No man alive is life-size except the recruit who is being measured as he enters the regiment, and then the only man who sees him life-size is the sergeant who measures him, and all that he sees of him is the end of his nose; when he is able to see his toes, the man ceases to be life-size."

Before the *Carlyle* went to Glasgow, Whistler wished to show it in London, where, except in Queen Square, it had not been seen since the Grosvenor Exhibition of 1877, and it was exhibited at the Goupil Gallery.

Mr. D. Croal Thomson, recognising that " the turning-point was approaching," suggested offering the portrait of *The Mother* to the Luxembourg. In Paris, as well as in London, there was a sudden curiosity and even a first beginning of a general appreciation of his work, which the last nine years had made much better known there. For, since 1882, he had shown at the Salon one after another of his great portraits: *Lady Meux, The Mother, Carlyle, Miss Alexander, The Yellow Buskin, M. Duret, Sarasate.* Then followed the *Rosa Corder* in the new Salon, formed by the *Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts*—a secession really from the old Salon of the *Société des Artistes Français*—where he appeared for the first time as *Sociétaire* in 1891, though Mr. Sargent and other Americans were made members in 1890. To the small distinguished International Exhibitions held in the Petit Gallery, he had been contributing many of his smaller works in every medium. The French were thus given the opportunity to see and judge and they did not misuse it. At Mr. Croal Thomson's suggestion, *The Mother* was then sent to Messrs. Boussod Valadon in Paris, and subscriptions for the purchase were opened. But before any amount worth mentioning was subscribed, the French Government, on the advice of M. Roger Marx, bought it for the nation. M. Bourgeois, the Minister of Fine Arts, had some doubt as to the possibility of offering for so fine a masterpiece the small price that the nation could afford. But Whistler at once set him at ease on this point, writing to him that, of all his pictures, he would prefer for *The Mother* so " solemn a consecration," and that he was proud of the honour France had shown him. The price actually paid by the French nation was four thousand francs, but it is almost unnecessary

TRAFALGAR SQUARE, CHELSEA

to record that Whistler's pleasure, as he expressed it to Mr. Alan S. Cole at the time, November 14, 1891, was in the fact of "his painting of his mother being 'unprecedently' chosen by the Minister of Beaux-Arts for the Luxembourg." France, however, in that year, made up for the meagre price it paid by bestowing upon Whistler an honour he valued higher than almost any he ever received, and making him Officer of the Legion of Honour.

The event was celebrated by a reception at the Chelsea Arts Club on the evening of December 19, 1891. Whistler was presented with a parchment of greetings, signed by a hundred members, as

> "a record of their high appreciation of the distinguished honour that has come to him by the placing of his mother's portrait in the national collection of France."

Whistler's speech in acknowledgment was characteristic. He was gratified by this token from his brother artists:

> "It is right at such a time of peace, after the struggle, to bury the hatchet—in the side of the enemy—and leave it there. The congratulations usher in the beginning of my career, for an artist's career always begins to-morrow."

He promised to be for long one of the Chelsea artists—a promise Chelsea artists showed no special desire to keep him to. He was a member of the club for a few years, until he went to Paris. When, later, Mr. Lavery proposed him as an Honorary Member, there was not enough enthusiasm to carry the motion.

Early in 1892, Mr. D. Croal Thomson, who has sent us the following account, arranged with Whistler for an exhibition of *Nocturnes, Marines and Chevalet Pieces* at the Goupil Gallery in London, or, as Whistler called it, "my heroic kiek in Bond Street."

> "I met Mr. Whistler in 1880, and from the first I seemed to be in complete sympathy with him. That he returned this

sentiment is very likely, for in all the succeeding twenty-five years, while having many and important business affairs together, we never had any serious discussions or disputes over anything.

" I became convinced that all Mr. Whistler's quarrels originated because the person concerned did not correctly understand and appreciate his work ; once Mr. Whistler became assured of living sympathy in his productions, my experience was that he was ready to accept all the rest. He knew that I had studied drawing and painting, and some nocturnes that I had made at the end of the 'seventies, before I had met him, were the source of some interesting and good-humourd chaff from him. In any case, these feeble efforts convinced him of my ability to understand, and my loyalty to him was never challenged in his lifetime.

" There is no doubt that Mr. Whistler was deeply touched and flattered by the acquisition in 1891 of Carlyle's portrait by the Glasgow Corporation.

" At that time I was director of the Goupil Gallery at 117 New Bond Street. I had not up to this date had any business transactions with Mr. Whistler, and he knew me only as a pronounced admirer of his art.

" I do not know if the painter had been anywhere else on the same errand, but I do know that he called on me on his own initiative to tell me that the *Carlyle* was going to Glasgow, and to say that he would like to exhibit the picture in London before it went to Scotland.

" I expressed the pleasure the news gave me, for although I had heard rumours of the affair, I was not in touch with its progress—the artist's intimation was the first direct information I had of its conclusion. Mr. Whistler repeated that he would like the portrait to be well seen in London, and I immediately offered to show it for him. I said to him, ' I will not only show the picture, but give it a room all to itself, and make it a shrine.' There was no need to say anything more ; Mr. Whistler understood what I meant, and he trusted me for the rest.

" Soon after the picture was brought to the Gallery and installed in a small salon, nothing else being hung in the room. Public intimation was given that the picture was on view without charge ; many people visited the Gallery, and, as I said to Mr. Whistler and his wife when they called at the end of the show, most of them came with a smile but many went away with the grave look which betokened deep thought. And a few, not a large number in these

days, seemed to understand how great a masterpiece they had been privileged to examine.

"Mr. Whistler came to thank my principals and me for lending the Gallery, for our artist was always most punctilious in such courtesies, and it was at this interview, there and then, in the Goupil Gallery, that the first idea of *The Mother* going to the Luxembourg was suggested.

"Telling the painter and his wife of my observation of our visitors and of the indications of change I had so readily remarked, I said to him that the time had at length arrived when some strong action should be energetically set in force to capture the public estimation, if necessary by storm, and place the 'master,' as we had begun to call him, in the niche we all believed he would certainly occupy sooner or later. It was only a question of hastening the fulfilment of this that prompted my own thought, for I knew well, and still think, that nothing I, or any one else, could do would affect the ultimate verdict, but I did think it was possible to obtain this more quickly, and what was principally in my mind, was to realise the result during the life-time of the painter.

"So I proposed to Mr. Whistler to sell *The Mother* to the National Gallery, or the Luxembourg.

"Then we set to and discussed the whole position, Mr. Whistler saying that he preferred the Luxembourg, for he considered the French Gallery more sympathetic and the French people more appreciative. The welcome with which the proposition was received in Paris was certainly one of the reasons which made Mr. Whistler, even when living in England and receiving more of his inspiration therein, aver that he preferred the French to the English people.

"Mr. Whistler left the matter in my hands for the time, and I began a lively correspondence with my friends in Paris. My connection with the house of Goupil led me to write to a member of that firm, and I chose M. Joyant as the one most likely to be sympathetic. I was not mistaken, for M. Joyant—who since then has become a partner in Goupil's successors—took up the idea with whole-hearted ardour. . . .

"The whole affair was peculiarly agreeable to Mr. Whistler, and he made no concealment of his satisfaction, and for about the only time in his life, so far as I know it, he openly rejoiced. . . .

"When the opportunity arose, very soon after, I again urged

Mr. Whistler to ' rub it in,' and go a step further towards attaining immediate favour, and not let the matter rest until it became too late. I said to him, speaking, of course, strictly from my own point of view, which after all was the one which put me closely in touch with the artist, ' Your etchings are known to every collector, your pastels have been exploited already in Bond Street, while your other works in lithography and water-colour will never command large enough markets to satisfy me and my Gallery, therefore there only remain your pictures in oil. I have found some success in showing the *Carlyle*, I have helped you towards placing *The Mother* in the Luxembourg; let us now gather together your paintings and make a very big splash.

" Mr. Whistler said very little, but I immediately ascertained that the proposal was completely acceptable to him. My thought was only to have his figure pictures, and at first I did not realise there were more than would fill one salon; but one day Mr. Whistler brought a list and said that the exhibition must embrace all his works in oil—Nocturnes, Symphonies, together with the Figures and Portraits which I had suggested, both old and new. It was a much larger scheme than I had projected, and from the length of the list and the importance of the pictures, I foresaw what a splendid opportunity the artist was laying before me, and I almost gasped with delight.

" It was common talk in those days that Mr. Whistler was a difficult man to get on with in the ordinary concerns of life, and I was not prepared for this complete realisation of my wishes. I had thought it likely that the artist would let me have my own way to some extent because of the immediately preceding incident, but I never counted on securing his whole-hearted support, far less on receiving his proposal for a much larger scheme, covering the whole of the artist's labours in the most permanent medium.

" But the event showed how little I knew the man; whereas up to this time I had believed I was promoting schemes with Mr. Whistler which he approved with a certain aloofness, I now realised I was only like the fly on the wheel, and that the artist was himself setting the whole machinery in motion, and that this machinery was vaster and more world-moving than anything I had ever had to do with hitherto.

" Mr. Whistler laboured almost night and day; he wrote letters to every one of the owners of his works in oil asking loans of the pictures. Some, like Mr. Alexander, and all the Ionides connection

OLD BATTERSEA BRIDGE

Brown and Silver

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acceded at once, but others made delays, and even to the end several owners absolutely declined to lend. On the whole, however, the artist was thoroughly well supported by his early patrons, and the result was a gathering together of the most complete collection of Mr. Whistler's best works in art. Even the remarkable Memorial Exhibition of 1903 was not finer, and London was taken by storm.

"Mr. Whistler was not present at the Private View. He knew that many people would expect to see him and talk enthusiastic nonsense, and he rightly decided he was better to be away, and I was left alone to receive the visitors. Some hundreds of cards of invitation were issued, and it really seemed as if every recipient had accepted the call. Literally, crowds thronged the galleries all day, and it is quite impossible to describe the excitement produced. I do not know how it fared with the artist and his wife during the day, but about five o'clock in the evening Mr. and Mrs. Whistler came in, though they would not enter the exhibition—they remained in a curtained-off portion of the Gallery near the entrance. One or two of their most intimate friends were informed by me of the presence of the painter, and a small reception was held, for a little while, but of course by that time the battle was over and won, and there were only congratulations to be rendered to the master. The previous day, March 18, 1892, the critics had the place to themselves, and several stayed practically all day long.

"The arrangement of the pictures was entirely in Mr. Whistler's own hands, for although it had been arranged that several young artists should come to the Gallery the evening the works were to be hung, through some mischance they did not arrive, and I was therefore left alone with Mr. Whistler, and received a great lesson in the art of arranging a collection.

"As hours went on and the workmen required a rest, I sent for some refreshments, which happened to be exactly to the liking of the artist, although at the moment I did not realise how much satisfaction I was giving to him in this trifling attention; but next day Whistler told his young friends how much they had missed, and what a splendid and exciting evening we had had in hanging the forty-three pictures of the collection.

"The success of the exhibition was so great that it was impossible to do anything but, as it were, shepherd the visitors in and out as rapidly as the attendants could. After the first two days we saw it was impossible for the serious people to examine

the pictures in quietness, and we decided to make Friday a half-crown day. The fashionable world took to this idea. On the other days policemen had to be requisitioned to keep order at the door, and in the afternoons the crush made it almost impossible to see the pictures.

"Another Whistlerian touch was given to the exhibition by its being announced that artists would be admitted free every morning up to eleven o'clock, and many dozens took advantage of this privilege, which formed the basis of a clever drawing in *Punch* by Mr. Bernard Partridge. At first the exhibition was to be opened for a fortnight, but Mr. Whistler wrote to most of the owners of the pictures and obtained permission to extend it another week. The last day the exhibition was open was a record, and there were nearly two thousand visitors to the rooms. The catalogue, of which thousands were sold, was itself remarkable, and the sale of these was entirely Mr. Whistler's own property.

"I do not think I am exaggerating when I say that this collection marked a revolution in the public feeling towards Whistler. His artistic powers were hitherto disputed on every hand, but when it was possible for lovers of art to see for themselves what the painter had accomplished, the whole position was changed. I will be pardoned, I hope, in stating that whereas up to that time the pictures of Mr. Whistler commanded only a small sum of money, after the exhibition a great number of connoisseurs desired to acquire his works, and therefore their money value immediately increased.

"In the Goupil collection all the pictures were contributed by private owners, and none were offered for sale. I may say in passing, that as a matter of fact, the crowds of visitiors were so great that no transaction of any serious kind was carried through in the Gallery between the hanging of the pictures and their dispersal—that is, for nearly five weeks there was practically no record of business.

"But the exhibition altered all this, and it is revealing no secrets to say that within a year after the exhibition was closed, I had aided in the transfer of more than one-half of the pictures from their first owners. So much so was this the case that Mr. Whistler to whom I always referred before concluding any transaction, came to the conclusion that there was hardly a holder of his pictures in England but who would sell when tempted by a large price. It may be that these owners had become affected by the continual

misunderstanding and abuse of Mr. Whistler's works, and that when they were offered double or three times the sum for which they had asked their pictures to be insured, they thought they had better take advantage of the enthusiasm of the moment. They did not realise that this enthusiasm would continue to enlarge, and that what seemed to them as original purchasers of the pictures to be a great price is only about one-fourth of their present money value.

"It was the artist's wish that a similar exhibition should be held in Paris, but the project fell through, and from more recent experience it would appear as if the London public sometimes so severely scoffed at by Mr. Whistler, was really more appreciative than the Parisian public, and, therefore, perhaps after all more intelligent."

CHAPTER XXXVI. THE TURN OF THE TIDE. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN NINETY-ONE TO EIGHTEEN NINETY-TWO CONTINUED

ONE reason of the success of the exhibition of 1892, which surprised not only Mr. Croal Thomson but all London, was Whistler's care, when selecting his pictures, to secure as great variety as possible. The collection was a magnificent refutation of everything that the critics had been saying about him for years. They dismissed his pictures as mere sketches, and he confronted them with *The Blue Wave, Brown and Silver: Old Battersea Bridge, The Music Room,* which had not been seen in London since the early 'sixties. They objected to his want of finish and slovenliness in detail, and his answer was the Japanese pictures, full of an elaboration of detail the Pre-Raphaelites never equalled, and finished with an exquisiteness of surface they never attempted. He was told that he could not draw, and he produced a group of his finest portraits; he was assured that he had no poetic feeling, no imagination, and he displayed the paintings of the Thames, with the sordid factories and chimneys on its banks transformed into a fairyland in the night. He was as careful in arranging the manner in which the pictures should be presented. His letters to Mr. Croal Thomson from Paris, where he was spending the greater part of 1892, were minute in his directions for cleaning and varnishing the paintings, and putting them into new frames of his own design. Indeed, the correspondence on the subject is, in every particular, a miracle of thoughtfulness, energy and method. In the face

THE GOLD SCREEN

(Caprice in Purple and Gold)

of so complete a collection, in such perfect condition and so well-hung, criticism was silenced. We remember the press view, and the dismay of the older critics who hoped for another " crop of little jokes," and the triumph of the younger critics who knew that Whistler, at last, had won the day. The papers, daily, weekly and monthly, almost unanimously admitted that the old game of ridicule was played out and praised the exhibition without reserve. When Whistler found that the approval of the public was no less unanimous, he was heard to say that even Academicians had been seen prowling about the place lost in admiration, that it needed only to send a season ticket to Ruskin to make the situation perfect and that,

" Well you know, they were always pearls I cast before them, and the people were always—well, the same people."

Whistler first intended to print the catalogue without any comment or quotation from the press. But the occasion to expose the futility of criticism, was too good to miss, and choice extracts were placed under the titles of the pictures. Catalogue and extracts are embodied in the latest edition of *The Gentle Art,* and though some of the points may now have lost their effect, they did not fail to rouse the public of the moment and enrage the critics, for big and little, he pilloried them all. It was cruel, but who among them had ever spared him ? The sub-title, *The Voice of a People,* explains his object in publishing the quotations, and the climax of his " wickedness " was the addition of an epilogue in the shape of an announcement, from the *Chronique des Beaux-Arts,* of the purchase of *The Mother* for the Luxembourg and its reception in France as a picture destined to rank with the work of Rembrandt, Titian, and Velasquez. The catalogue was, as usual, bound in brown paper, and it received the same attention he gave to every detail of the exhibition. Because

the order of the quotations did not please him in the first edition, two hundred and fifty copies were destroyed on press day and the critics kept waiting until half-past four in the afternoon. Another touch of "wickedness" was his perpetuating in *The Gentle Art* a printer's error in the second edition, by which "Kindly lent by their Owners" became "Kindly Lent their Owners." Five editions in all were printed.

Before the show was closed, the pictures were all photographed, and afterwards published in a portfolio. He designed the cover in the brown and yellow of *The Gentle Art*. There were a hundred sets, each photograph signed by Whistler, published at six guineas, and two hundred unsigned at four guineas.

An immediate result of the exhibition was that purchasers and sitters now came in numbers. One of the first to approach him was the Duke of Marlborough, who gave him a commission for a portrait and asked him and Mrs. Whistler to Blenheim for the autumn. Whistler wrote the Duke one of his "charming letters," and then heard of his sudden death, and, he told us,

> "Now I shall never know whether my letter killed him, or whether he died before he got it.—Well, they all want to be painted because of these pictures, but why wouldn't they be painted years ago, when I wanted to paint them? and could have painted them just as well?"

He was besieged by Americans, who were determined "to pour California into his lap:" a determination to which he had no objection. His pockets should be always full, or his golden eggs were addled. He thought it would be "amazing fun" to be rich. Once, driving with Mr. Sidney Starr, he said:

> "Starr, I have not dined, as you know, so you need not think I say this in any but a cold and careful spirit; it is better to live on

THE LAST OF OLD WESTMINSTER

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THE LAST OF OLD WESTMINSTER

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bread and cheese and paint beautiful things, than to live like Dives and paint pot-boilers. But a painter really should not have to worry about—'various,' you know. Poverty may induce industry, but it does not produce the fine flower of painting. The test is not poverty, it's money. Give a painter money and see what he'll do; if he does not paint, his work is well lost to the world. If I had had—say, three thousand pounds a year, what beautiful things I could have done."

Nothing marked the difference in the public's estimation of him more than the increasing and eager demand for his earlier pictures which had been scorned not so very long ago. Never, at any time, did so many change hands as during the next two or three years, and always at immensely higher prices. To an American, he sold *The Falling Rocket,* the subject of the trial, for eight hundred guineas, and only wished that Ruskin could know that it had been valued at "four pots of paint:" two hundred guineas having been the original price objected to by Ruskin. The Leyland sale, May 28, 1892, brought the *Princesse du Pays de la Porcelaine* and smaller works into the auction room, and, though the *Princesse* fetched only four hundred and twenty guineas, this was four times as much as Whistler had received for it. What would he have said to the five thousand guineas Mr. Freer paid for it within a year of his death? The sixty or eighty pounds Mr. Leathart had paid Whistler for the *Lange Leizen* increased to six or eight hundred when he sold it. Mr. Ionides had bought *Sea and Rain* for twenty or thirty pounds, and now asked three hundred. Fifty pounds, the price of the *Blue Wave* when Mr. Gerald Potter had it from Whistler, multiplied to a thousand when it was his turn to dispose of it. Fourteen hundred pounds was given by Mr. Studd for *The Little White Girl* and a Nocturne, the two having cost Mr. Potter about one hundred and eighty pounds, and we have been told that Mr. Studd was recently offered six thousand pounds for *The Little White Girl* alone. Whistler resented it,

not unnaturally, when he found that fortunes were being made " at his expense " by so-called friends, and he complained that they were turning his reputation into pounds, shillings and pence, travelling over Europe and holiday-making on the profits. He went even to the extent of suggesting that a work of art, when sold, should still remain the artist's property, that it was only " lent its owner." It was now his frequent demand to owners, and condition to purchasers, that his pictures should be available for exhibition when and where and as often as he pleased. This is illustrated in the following letter which Mr. H. S. Theobald, K.C., writes us :

" . . . . Whistler's work was one of my early admirations, and my admiration of it steadily grew. About 1870 I began to get such of his etchings as I could, and somewhere early in the 'eighties, I think it was, I became the fortunate possessor of some thirty or forty drawings and pastels through the Dowdeswells. Whistler became aware of my ownership of these, and they sometimes brought him to my house, which was then in a remote spot called Westbourne Square. The pictures, owing to stress of space, hung mostly on the staircase, and Whistler would stand in rapt admiration before them, with occasional ejaculations of ' how lovely,' ' how divine,' and so on. On one of these occasions he asked my wife if she had had her portrait taken, ' but of course not,' he added, ' as I have not painted you.'

" My intercourse with the Master was limited to occasions when he wanted to borrow the pictures. His manner of proceeding was somewhat abrupt. Some morning a person would appear in a four-wheel cab and present Whistler's card, on which was written, ' Please let bearer have fourteen of my pictures.' Sometimes, but not often, there was a preliminary warning from Whistler himself. But though the pictures went easily, it was a labour of Hercules to retrieve them. Once when I went to fetch them at his studio by appointment, after a previous effort, also by appointment, which was not kept, I found the studio locked, but after a search among the neighbours I got the key and then I found some two or three hundred pictures stacked round the room buried in the dust of ages. Whistler loved his pictures, but he certainly

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THE CHILDREN OF F. R. LEYLAND, ESQ.

(*Pastels*)

took no care of them. On that occasion I remember I took away by mistake in exchange for one of my pictures, a Nocturne that did not belong to me, though it was very like one of mine. You can imagine the Master's winged words when he found this out. I could only cry *mea culpa* and bow my head before the storm. It was the risk to which I feared the pictures were exposed which made me harden my heart. You see, therefore, that the side of Whistler's character which came before me was the self-asserting egotistic side—not the side which I suppose he kept for his friends. But the Master, even when most egotistic, was always delightful, for his egotism was relieved by wit and there was always the great artist in the background. You remember his speech at the dinner we gave him in London many years ago—the opening words come back to me. 'Gentlemen, we live in an age when every remedy has its appropriate disease'—the right note was struck at once. . . ."

It was bad enough in Whistler's eyes when he had sold the picture that came up for sale to its original owner; when he had given it, he could see nothing in the sale except "robbery." An instance is recalled to us by Sir Rennell Rodd, who was in Paris in 1892, the year when this "traffic," as Whistler called it, had begun:

"We foregathered again. I remember at this time taking Mrs. Jack Gardner, of Boston, to acquire one of his pictures which he had recovered, under peculiar conditions illustrating the peculiar twist of his mind and his way of looking at things, not agreeable to every one. A certain Mr. X. had bought four or five of his pictures, and, at that time, Jimmy had made him a present of another—a particularly beautiful picture to my mind, a long stretch of foreshore sand and sea and sky. When X. was practically ruined, and had to sell his pictures, he passed the Whistlers on to their creator, who would, he thought, be better able to dispose of them for him. Jimmy agreed to do so. He always loved to get back any of his own works into his studio. and to appreciate them over again after the long interval of absence. But he explained to X. as he told me himself, that this arrangement of course affected the pictures which he had bought, the four; there was, however, another, a fifth, which had been a

gift: and a gift, he was sure X. himself would admit, was conditioned by certain sentimental considerations, and the transfer of the object was occasioned by a certain expansion of feeling, and while kind feeling subsisted the nature of the gift as a pledge of friendship, or affection, was attached to the object in question, and, so long as such feelings were reciprocated, the picture was of course the property of X., but once the intention had invaded his mind of selling it or transferring it to auction without sentiment, and for a consideration, the whole spirit of the original transfer was shattered, annihilated; the gift that was had ceased to be a gift in the spirit in which it was given—'and, in fact,' said Jimmy, 'this picture is mine again.' So he kept it—and he had it there in Paris, and that is the picture Mrs. Gardner acquired."

Whistler was no more anxious to control the exhibition of his pictures, than to suppress them altogether when he did not care to have them shown or sold. The large *Three Girls* (*Three Figures, Pink and Grey* in the London Memorial Exhibition) was at Messrs. Dowdeswell's in the summer of 1891. He had before this tried to get possession of it in order that he might destroy it, and he had offered to paint the portrait of the owner and his wife in exchange. His offer was refused, and, while the picture was at Messrs. Dowdeswell's, he wrote a letter to the *Pall Mall Gazette* (July 28, 1892), to explain that it was a "painting thrown aside for destruction." An impudent answer from a critic led to a more explicit statement of his views on the subject:

"All along have I carefully destroyed plates, torn up proofs, and burned canvases, that the truth of the quoted word shall prevail, and that the future collector shall be spared the mortification of cataloguing his pet mistakes. To destroy, is to remain."

In the summer of 1892, Whistler was invited by Sir Frederick Leighton to show in the British Section at the World's Columbian Exposition to be held in Chicago the following year, and the picture specially mentioned for the purpose was the

Carlyle. The portrait had been skied in a remote corner the previous winter at the Victorian Exhibition in the New Gallery, of which Mr. J. W. Beck was Secretary, as he was now of the Fine Arts Committee for Chicago. Whistler never forgot. He wrote to Mr. Beck, sending his "distinguished consideration" to the President, with the assurance

> "that I have an undefined sense of something ominously flattering occurring, but that no previous desire on his part ever to deal with work of mine has prepared me with the proper form of acknowledgment. No, no, Mr. Beck!—Once hung, twice shy!"

When the letter was sent to the papers, and printers made "sky" of the "shy," Whistler was enchanted. Mr. Smalley told the story of Leighton's invitation in the *Times*, after Whistler's death, under the impression that he had been invited to show at Burlington House. That Whistler never was invited to show anything there we know, and we have the further testimony of Mr. Fred. Eaton, Secretary of the Academy:

> "No such proposal as Mr. Smalley speaks of, was ever made to Mr. Whistler, and it is difficult to understand on what grounds he made such a statement."

It is at least an amusing coincidence that this should seem to be confirmed by the fate of a letter addressed to Whistler, "The Academy, England," which, after having gone to the newspaper of that name, was next sent to Burlington House, and finally reached Whistler with "Not known at the R.A.," written on the cover. Here was one of the little incidents that Whistler called "the droll things of this pleasant life," and he sent the cover for reproduction to the *Daily Mail* with the reflection:

> "In these days of doubtful frequentation, it is my rare good fortune to be able to send you an unsolicited official and final certificate of character."

Whistler did not depend upon the British Section at the Chicago Exposition. Americans now made up for the official blunders of 1889. Professor Halsey C. Ives, Chief of the Art Department in Chicago, wrote to Whistler letters that Whistler found most courteous, and everything was done to secure a good show of his pictures and prints. We might as well say at once that, as a result, he was splendidly represented by *The Yellow Buskin*, the *Princesse du Pays de la Porcelaine*, the *Fur Jacket* among other paintings, and by etchings of every period. The medal given him, was the first official honour from his native land, where, it should also be explained, never before had so representative a collection of his work been seen.

Toward the end of 1892, the appreciation of America was expressed in another form. The new Boston Library was being built, and Messrs. McKim, Meade and White were the architects. It was determined that the interior should be decorated by the most distinguished American artists. Mr. Sargent and Mr. Abbey had been already commissioned to do part of the work, when they joined with Stanford White and St. Gaudens in trying to induce Whistler to undertake the large panel on the stairs. He made notes and suggestions for the design, which, he told us, was to be a great peacock ten feet high, but the work was put off, and, in the end, nothing came of the first great opportunity given him for mural decoration since the Peacock Room.

CHAPTER XXXVII. PARIS. THE YEAR EIGHTEEN NINETY-TWO TO NINETY-THREE

WHISTLER went to Paris to live in 1892. Moving from London was, for him, a complicated affair, and, during several months, he and Mrs. Whistler, as well as Miss Birnie Philip (Mrs. Whibley), were continually running backward and forward, until they finally settled in the Rue du Bac. We saw him now, whenever he came to London, and whenever we were in Paris, and, as we were there often, this means that we saw much of him.

At this time, a group of artists and art critics, who were mostly friends, and whose appreciation of Whistler had not waited for the turning of the tide, were in the habit of going together to Paris for the opening of the Salon. In 1892, R. A. M. Stevenson, Aubrey Beardsley, Henry Harland, D. S. McColl, Charles W. Furse, Alexander and Robert Ross among others, were with us, and it was a pleasure to us all to find Whistler triumphing in Paris as he had triumphed earlier in the spring in London. His pictures at the Champ-de-Mars were the most talked about and the most distinguished in an unusually good Salon. Many came straight from the Goupil Exhibition. Whistler called it "a stupendous success all along the line," and he said that, coming after the Goupil "heroic kick," it made everything for him complete and perfect. He was pleased also with the fact that this year he was on the jury.

In the autumn, J., returning to Paris, after a long summer

in the south of France, found Whistler installed in the Hotel du Bon Lafontaine at the corner of the Rue de Grenelle and the Rue des Saints-Pères; a house, Whistler said, full of Bishops, Cardinals, and *Monsignori*, and altogether most correct. The following is J.'s account of his days with Whistler during this autumn and the summer of 1893:

"I found him, not too comfortably established, in one or two small rooms. He was full of the apartment in the Rue du Bac, which I was taken to see, though there was nothing to see but workmen and packing-boxes. In the midst of the moving, he was working, and, one day, I found him in his bedroom with Mallarmé, whose portrait in lithography he was drawing, and there was scarcely place for the three of us.

"It was the first time I had ever seen Whistler working on a lithograph. He had great trouble with this portrait, which he did more than once: not altogether because, as M. Duret says, he could not get the head right, but because he was trying experiments with paper. He was thoroughly dissatisfied with the mechanical grained paper, which he had used for the *Albemarle* and the *Whirlwind* prints, and he was then afraid of trusting to the post the paper that Way was sending him. He had found at Belfont's or Lemercier's some thin textureless transfer paper, thin as tissue paper, which delighted him, though it was difficult to work on. When he was doing the Mallarmé, I remember he put the paper down on a roughish book cover. He liked the grain the cover gave him, for it was not mechanical, and, when the grain seemed to repeat itself, he would shift the drawing, and thus get a new surface. I do not know whether he used this thin paper to any extent, but he said he found it delightful, if difficult, to work on, and spoke of the advantage of being able to roll it up and send it to the printer by post without risk. The *Mallarmé*, however, was not sent to Way, but was printed by Belfont in Paris. He used that afternoon a tiny bit of lithographic

chalk, holding it in his fingers, and not in a crayon-holder, as lithographers do.

"The next day, he took me with him to the printers, Belfont's, in the Rue Gaillon. We went also to Lemercier's, where he introduced me to M. Duchâtel and to M. Marty, who was then preparing *L'Estampe Originale*, devoting himself to the revival of artistic lithography in France. As I remember, the talk was technical, when not of the wonders of the apartment in the Rue du Bac—where 'Peace threatens to take up her abode in the garden of our pretty pavilion,' Mr. Sidney Starr quotes Whistler as saying—and the studio in the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, which I did not see until later on. He was also planning his colour lithographs, and he explained to me his methods, though very few colour-prints were made until the next year. What he wanted was to use in lithography the Japanese method of colour-printing. He wished to get the freshness of colour which is lacking in European lithographs but which is the great beauty of Japanese colour-prints. He made the complete drawing in the ordinary manner, in black litho chalk, either on stone or paper, and then settled in his mind the colour-scheme and the number of colours to be employed. Instead of working as lithographers previously worked, superimposing the colours, for example, blue over yellow to get green, sometimes getting it and sometimes not, but always losing the freshness of a Japanese print, he himself in the printing office, mixed just the green or other colour he intended the printer to use. He then made as many transfers from the original drawing on the stone as there were to be colours in the completed print. He scratched out, as the lithographer does, from one of the transfers, all parts of the drawing save the red; from another all save the blue; from a third, all save the brown; from a fourth, all save the yellow. The black or grey key block was first printed, and then the colours. But there

was this difference : each colour, as in mosaic or a Japanese print, fitted a space that was left for it, one was not placed on top of another, so that, as in Japanese prints, the colours would remain fresh and pure, and the surface of the paper not be disturbed. Colour was applied in the most personal manner, delicately, exquisitely, just a touch, a suggestion in the roof, the shutters of a house, in the draperies of the model, but even for this delicacy, three, five, and, in the most elaborate, six printings were required. He also told me what he thought of printing etchings in colour—simply, that it was abominable, vulgar, and stupid. Good black or brown ink, on good old paper, had been good enough for Rembrandt, it was good enough for him, and it ought to be good enough in the future for the few people who care about etching. To-day, when the world is swamped with the childish print in colour, it may be well to remember Whistler's words. His reason for rejecting the etching in colour is as simple and rational as his reason for making the lithograph in colour. Lithography is a method of surface printing ; the colour, rolled on to the surface of the stone, is merely rubbed on to, or scraped off on, the paper. In etching or engraving, the colour is first hammered into the engraved plate with a dabber and then forced out by excessive pressure, fatal to any but the strongest or purest of blacks and of browns ; and colours, whether printed from one plate or a dozen, must have the freshness, the quality, squeezed out of them.

" He was again in London at the end of December (1892) eating his Christmas dinner with his future brother-in-law. He stayed only a few days, but long enough to arrange to show his beautiful little-known *Lady Meux : White and Black*—in the first exhibition of the Grafton Gallery, early in 1893, and a number of his Venice etchings with the destroyed plates at the Fine Art Society's. We went back

WHISTLER AT HIS PRINTING PRESS IN THE RUE NOTRE DAME DES CHAMPS, PARIS

to Paris for the Salon of 1893, and found Whistler well settled in the Rue du Bac. Neither he nor Rodin came to the *Vernissage*, but I remember the magnificent apparition of Carolus-Duran, gorgeous to behold. Zola was there, and everybody climbed on chairs to see him. This was the year when Aman-Jean arranged the hair of Madame Aman-Jean low down on each side of her face, not only painting her so, but bringing her to the *Vernissage*. The sensation she produced was so great that every woman in Paris who could followed this new and charming fashion. Beardsley, MacColl and 'Bob' Stevenson were with us.

"MacColl and I went to see Whistler at once in the new studio. It was at the top of one of the highest buildings in the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, No. 86. As the *concierge* said, in directing visitors, '*On ne peut pas aller plus loin que M. Vistlaire!*' The climb always seemed to me endless, and must have done much harm to Whistler, whose heart was weak, though benches were placed on some of the landings where, if he had time, he could rest. When we got to the sixth storey, MacColl knocked. There was a rapid movement across the floor, and the door was opened a little. But when he saw us it was thrown wide open, and we were welcomed.

"The studio was a big bare room, the biggest studio Whistler ever had—a simple tone of rose on the walls; a lounge, a few chairs, a white-wood cabinet for the little drawings and prints and pastels; the blue screen with the river, the church, and the gold moon; two or three easels, nothing on them; rows and rows of canvases on the floor, all with their faces to the wall; in the further corner, a printing press—rather, a printing shop, with inks and papers on shelves; a little gallery above, a room or two opening off; a model's dressing-room under it; and in front, when you turned, the great studio window, with all Paris toward

the Panthéon over the Luxembourg gardens. There was another little room, or entrance-hall at the top of the stairs, and opposite, another, a sort of kitchen. On the front was a balcony with flowers.

"'Carmen,' his model, had been posing, and, while he showed us some of his work, she got breakfast, and we stayed a good part of the day. Mrs. Whistler came up later. I think she breakfasted with us. I have no recollection of what he talked about. But I am sure it was of what they had been saying in London, of what they were saying in Paris, of what he was doing. That is what it always was. We were all asked to lunch the following Sunday at the house.

"The apartment, No. 110 Rue du Bac, was on the right-hand side, just before you reached the *Bon Marché* going up the street from the river. You went through a big *porte cochère* by the *concierge* box, down a long covered tunnel, then between high walls, until you came to a little courtyard with several doors—a bit of an old frieze in one place and a drinking fountain. Whistler's door was not to be mistaken —painted blue, with a brass knocker. I do not suppose that then there was another like it in Paris. Inside, you were on a little landing with three or four steps down to the floor, a few feet lower than the courtyard. This room contained nothing, or almost nothing, but some trunks (which, as in his other houses, gave the appearance of his having just moved in, or being just about to start on a journey) and a settee, always covered with a profusion of hats and coats. Opposite the entrance, a big door opened into a spacious room, decorated in simple flat tones of blue, with white doors and windows, furnished with a few Empire chairs and a couch, a grand piano, and a table which, like the blue matting-covered floor, was always littered with newspapers. Once in a while there was a single picture of his on the wall. For some time, the *Venus*, one of the *Projects*, hung or stood about.

There were doors to the right and left, and, on the far side, another big door and big windows opened on a large garden, a real bit of the country in Paris. It stretched away, in dense undergrowth, to several huge trees. Later, there was a trellis over the door, designed by Mrs. Whistler, and there were flowers everywhere—'In his roses he buried his troubles,' Mr. Wuerpel writes of the garden; and there were many birds: among them, at one time, an awful mocking bird; at another time, a white parrot, which finally escaped, and, in a temper, climbed up a tree where nobody could reach it, and starved itself to death, to Whistler's grief. At the bottom of the garden there were seats. The dining-room was to the right of the drawing-room. It was equally simple, in blue. Only there was blue and white china in a cupboard, and a big dining-table, round which were more Empire chairs, and in the centre a large, low blue and white porcelain stand, on it always big bowls of flowers; over it, hanging from the ceiling, a huge Japanese something like a bird-cage.

"From Paris, in May, I went down to Caen and Coutances, coming back a few weeks later. Beardsley was still in Paris, or had returned, and we were both stopping at the Hotel de Portugal et de l'Univers, then known to every art student. Wagner was being played at the Opera, almost for the first time. Paris was very disturbed, there were demonstrations against Wagner, really against Germany. We went, Beardsley then wild about Wagner, and doing, I think, the drawing of *The Wagnerites*. He had come over to get backgrounds in the rose arbours and the dense alleys of the Luxembourg gardens, where Whistler had made his lithographs. Coming away from the Opera, we went across to the *Café de la Paix* at midnight. The first person we saw was Whistler. He was with some people, but they left soon, and he joined us. Beardsley also left almost at once, but not before Whistler had asked us to come the next Sunday afternoon to the Rue

du Bac. Then, for the first time, I learned what he thought of ' æstheticism ' and ' decadence.'

> " ' Why do you get mixed up with such things ? Look at him !—he's just like his drawings—he's all hairs and peacock plumes—hairs on his head—hairs on his finger ends—hairs in his ears—hairs on his toes. And what shoes he wears—hairs growing out of them ! '

I said, ' Why did you ask him to the Rue du Bac ? ' —' Oh—well—well—well ! ' And then it was late, or early, and the last thing was, ' Well, you'll come and bring him too.'

" Years later, in Buckingham Street, Whistler met Beardsley and got to like not only him, as everybody did, but his work. One night, when Whistler was with us, Beardsley turned up, as always when he went to see any one, with his portfolio of his latest work under his arm. This time it held the illustrations for *The Rape of the Lock,* which he had just made. Whistler, who always saw everything that was being done, had seen the *Yellow Book,* started in 1894 by Harland and Beardsley, and he disliked it as much as he then disliked both the editors ; he had also seen the illustrations to *Salome,* disliking them too, probably because of Oscar Wilde ; he knew many of the other drawings, one of which, whether intentionally or unintentionally, was more or less a reminiscence of Mrs. Whistler ; and he no doubt knew that Beardsley had made a caricature of him, which one of the Followers carefully left in a cab. When Beardsley opened the portfolio, and began to show us the *Rape of the Lock,* Whistler looked at them first indifferently, then with interest, then with delight. And then he said slowly, ' Aubrey, I have made a very great mistake—you are a very great artist.' And the boy burst out crying. All Whistler could say, when he could say anything, was ' I mean it—I mean it—I mean it.'

" On the following Sunday, that summer in Paris, Beardsley

and I went to the Rue du Bac, Beardsley in a little straw hat like Whistler's. Whistler was in the garden, and there were many Americans; and Arsène Alexandre, who then lived in a tower, and Mallarmé; some people from the British Embassy; and, presently, Mr. Jacomb Hood came, bringing an Honourable Amateur, who asked the Whistlers, Beardsley and myself to dinner at one of the *cafés* in the Champs-Elysées. As we left the Rue du Bac, Whistler whispered to me, 'Those hairs—hairs everywhere!' I said to him, 'But you were very nice, and, of course, you'll come to dinner!' And, of course, he never came.

"I was working in Paris, making drawings and etchings of Notre-Dame. I had moved from the hotel to one of the high old houses of lodgings and studios, with cabmen's *cafés* and restaurants under them, on the Quai des Grands Augustins. I had gone there because of the magnificent view of the Cathedral. Most of the time I was at work up among the Devils of Notre-Dame, using one of the towers as a studio by permission of the Government and the Cardinal-Archbishop. One morning—it was in June—I heard the puffing and groaning of some one climbing slowly the endless winding staircase, and the next thing I saw was Whistler. When he got his breath and I had got over my astonishment, I either began to ask why he had come, or he began to explain the reason. He had learned where I was staying, and he said he had been to the hotel, which was, well!—I think it reminded him of his own days *au sixième*, for that was the floor I was on. He left a note written on the *buvette* paper, in which he said, 'Jolly the place seems to be!' After he had climbed up to my rooms, the *patron* told him where he possibly would find me, and then the people at the foot of the tower said I was up above.

"He told me why he had come. He was working on a series of etchings of Paris. Some were only just begun, others

were ready to bite, but a number ought to be printed, and would I come and help him ? Of course, I was pleased, and I said I would. I remember taking him about among the strange creatures that haunt the place : the old keeper with his grisly tales of suicides and of how he stuck to the tower all through the Commune, even when the church was set on fire ; the awful bell that, at noon, suddenly crashed in your ears ; the uncanny cat that used to perch on crockets and gargoyles, and try to catch sparrows with nothing at all below her, and make, from one parapet to another, flying cuts over space when visitors came up ; and the horrid chimeræ themselves. He did not like it, and was not happy until we were safely seated in the back room of a restaurant just across the street. He talked about the printing, saying that I could help him, and he could teach me.

" Next morning I was at the Rue du Bac at nine. After I had waited for what seemed hours, and had breakfasted with him and Mrs. Whistler, and we had had our coffee and a cigarette in the garden, where there was a little table and an American rocking-chair for him—well, after this, it was too late to go to the studio. He brought out some of the plates which he had been working on—the plates of little shops in the near streets and we looked at them, and that was all. So it went on the next day, and the next, until on the third or fourth things came to a head, and I told him that, charming as this life was, either we must print or I must go back to my drawing. In five minutes we were in a cab, on our way to the studio. He understood that, much as I admired his work and appreciated him, I could not pay for this appreciation and admiration with my time. From the moment this was plain between us, there was no interruption to our friendship for the rest of his life.

" We set to work at the press Belfont had put up for him. He peeled down to his undershirt with short sleeves, and I

saw then, in his muscles, one reason why he was never tired. He put on an apron. The plates, only slightly heated, if heated at all, were inked and wiped, sometimes with his hand, at others with a rag, till nearly clean, though a good tone was left. He really painted the plate with his hand that day. I got the paper ready on the press and pulled the proof, he inking and I pulling all the afternoon. As each proof came off the press, he looked at it, not satisfied, for they were all weak, and saying, ' we'll keep it as the first proof, and it will be worth something some day.' Then he put the prints between sheets of blotting-paper, and that night, or the next, after dinner, trimmed them with scissors, and put them back between the folded sheets of blotting-paper which were thrown round on the table and on the floor. Between the sheets, the proofs dried naturally and were not squashed flat.

" The printing went on for several days, he getting more and more dissatisfied, until I found an old man, Lamour, at the top of an old house in the Rue de la Harpe, who could reground the plates. But Whistler did not rebite them, and never touched them until long after in England.

" A number of plates had never been bitten, and one hot Sunday afternoon he brought them in the garden at the Rue du Bac. A chair was placed under the trees, and on it a wash-basin, into which each plate was put. Instead of pouring the diluted acid all over the plate in the usual fashion drops were taken up from the bottle on a feather, and the plate practically painted with the acid. The acid was coaxed, or, rather, used as one would use water-colour, dragged and washed about. Depth and strength were got by simply leaving a drop of acid on the lines where these effects were needed. There was little stopping-out of passages where greater delicacy was required; when there was any, the stopping-out varnish was thinned with turpentine, and Whistler, with a camel's hair brush, painted over the parts

that did not need further biting. To me, it was a revelation. Sometimes he drew on the plate. Instead of the huge crowbar used by most etchers, he worked with a perfectly balanced, beautifully designed little needle, three or four inches long, made for him by an instrument maker in Paris. He always carried several in a little silver box. The grounds on all the plates were bad and came off, and the proofs he pulled afterwards in the studio were not at all what he wanted. These were almost the last plates he ever etched.

" He was not painting very much then, only a few people came to the studio, and he went out little. No one was in the Rue du Bac but Mrs. Whistler for a while, and there were complications with the servants—how people who kept such hours, or no hours, could keep servants would have been a mystery, had not servants worshipped him. Almost daily the *petit bleu* asking me to dinner would come to my lodgings. Or else Whistler would appear early in the morning, if I had not been to him the day before. In those early days in June, I seldom met any one at the house, and he never dressed for dinner, possibly because I had no dress clothes with me : he would insist on my coming, telling me not to mind the stains or the ink-spots ! One evening in the garden with them, I found a little man, a thorough Englishman, in big spectacles, with a curious sniff, who was holding a hose and watering the plants. He was introduced to me as Mr. Webb, Whistler's solicitor, though, in the process, we came near being drenched by the wobbling hose. It was that evening I first heard the chant of the Missionary Brothers from behind the great wall beyond the trees. A bell sounded, and, as the notes died away, a wailing chant arose, went on for a little, then died away as mysteriously as it came. Always, when it did come, it hushed us. At dinner we should be cosy and jolly, Whistler had said in asking me, and we were, and it was arranged that we should go the next day to Fontainebleau.

IN THE STUDIO AT THE RUE NOTRE DAME DES CHAMPS, PARIS

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"They called for me at the hotel in the morning. We drove to the Lyons station, Whistler, his wife, Mr. Webb and I. And Whistler had the little paint-box which always went with him, though on these occasions it was the rarest thing that he ever did anything—and we got to Fontainebleau. We lunched in a garden. We didn't go to the Palace, but drove to Barbizon, stopping at Siron's, and through the forest. I don't think the views or the trees interested him at all. He was very quiet all the way, but no sooner were we back than we must hunt for 'old things': here was a Palace, and great people had lived here, there might be silver, there might be blue and white,—'though really now, you know you can find better blue and white, and cheaper silver, under the noses of the Britons, in Wardour Street, than anywhere.' We did not find any blue and white, or silver. But there were three folio volumes of old paper containing a collection of dried leaves—which we bought and shared. He printed lithographs on his share, and I have mine. But those three volumes were to him more valuable than all the Palace, and the Millet studio which we never saw.

"It was late when we got back. His servants had gone to bed, and Marguery's and the places where he liked to dine were shut. So we bought what we could in the near shops and sat down in the Rue du Bac to eat the supper we had collected. After we had finished, I witnessed his and Mrs. Whistler's wills which Mr. Webb had brought with him from London, and for this the long day had been a preparation.

"If I did not always accept Whistler's invitations, he would reproach me as an awful disappointment and a bad man. If I did not go to the dinner, to which I was bidden at an hour's notice, he would tell me afterwards of the much cool drink and encouraging refreshment he had prepared for me. He always asked me to bring my friends. Mr. J. Fulleylove had come over to 'do' Paris, and I took him to

the Rue du Bac—' *les Pleins d'Amour,*' Whistler called him and Mrs. Fulleylove, whose eyes he was always praising. They were working at St. Denis, and so was I, and one day Whistler and Mrs. Whistler came in the primitive steam tram that starts from the Madeleine to see the place. We lunched —badly—and he was bored with the church, though he had brought lithograph paper and colours to make a sketch of it.

" One Sunday, Mr. E. G. Kennedy's portrait was painted in the garden on a very small canvas or a panel, and all the world was kept out on that occasion. I had never before seen Whistler paint. He worked away all afternoon, hissing to himself, which, Mrs. Whistler said, he did only when things were going well. If Kennedy shifted—there were no rests—Whistler would scream, and he worked on, and on, and the sun went down ; and Kennedy stood, and Whistler painted, and the monks began their chant, and darkness was coming on. The hissing stopped—a paint rag came out —and, with one fierce dash, it was all rubbed off. ' Oh, well,' was all he said. Kennedy was limbered up, and we went to dinner.

" After that, almost every night we dined together through that lovely June : either with him in the Rue du Bac, or he came with us to Marguery's or to La Pérouse—once to St. Germain—or somewhere that was delightful.

" The summer was famous in Paris as that of the ' Sarah Brown Students' Revolution,' the row that grew out of the *Quatz' Arts* Ball. When I went to the Rue du Bac, I used to tell Whistler of the doings on the Boul' Mich' and around St. Germain des Prés. Wisely, he would not go out to see the disturbances, but I had to walk through the length of the *Quartier* to get to him. Then I spent some evenings in the midst of it all at the *Café Cluny* with Octave Uzanne, Renouard and Buhot. Processions, with ' Sally ' Brown—she was a model—at the head, would march down the Boul' Mich'

solemnly chanting '*Conspuez Lozé*'—the *Préfet*—pass over the bridge, and bring up in front of the *Préfecture* of Police, out of which a *sortie* of police on horseback and on foot would come. At once the demonstrators, until then warlike as possible, would be transformed into peaceable citizens taking their coffee and *petits verres* at the surrounding *cafés*.

"After some nights of this, when one or two people got killed, windows were smashed and kiosques were burned, Belleville and Montmartre hurried over to take part in the fun, which culminated on the Fourth of July—my birthday. Whistler proposed to celebrate both together, and we were to meet at six and dine somewhere—Marguery's, I think. All day painters and students had been demonstrating. It was great fun. They chivvied a policeman, somebody threw a brick at him, he called, and, the next thing, down the street charged a mounted squadron. They dodged into an open doorway, shut it behind them, and, when the soldiers had passed, went out, chivvied another policeman, and the same thing happened all over again. In the evening, as I came up to St. Germain des Prés, I saw an enormous crowd pour out of one of the narrow streets. There were students, *rapins* male and female, at the head, but all round in a solid mass, was a crowd—the dregs of Paris, a crowd I have never seen before or since—and the chant of the students was drowned by the *Carmagnole*. When they reached the square, every shop was shut, not before the windows of many were broken, and the students had vanished. They seized the *café* tables and threw them across the streets and the Boulevard. They rushed to the trees, tore up the gratings, raised them in their sections, dashed them on the asphalt, which cracked, and the iron-work broke into battle axes. In a minute they were armed. Over went the newspaper-kiosques, old ladies and all, and they were dragged across the streets. A cart of bricks passed, the traces were

cut, and the bricks dumped in the middle of the Rue de Rennes. A Montparnasse three-horse omnibus appeared: the horses were taken out, and the passengers forced to get down, all but one old gentleman, who announced that he had paid his fare to the station, and there he was going; two men mounted on top, took away the umbrella he was pointing his speech with, hooked it in his collar, and carefully lowered him into the crowd below. The omnibus and then a tram were smashed and the place was barricaded. For two reasons I thought I had better leave; there was no pretended *Entente Cordiale* in those days, and it was dinner-time.

"Whistler, when I arrived at the house, ridiculed the affair, but he decided all the same to dine at home, and to put off by telegram the dinner he had ordered. I went round to the Boulevard St. Germain again to send the wire, and found it barred with soldiers and police, and the entire Boulevard, as far as one could see, littered with all sorts of hats and caps, sticks and umbrellas. There had been a cavalry charge and this was the result.

"We dined merrily, but Kennedy and I left early.

"There was a great deal of rioting through the night, but that was the end of it, for regiments were bivouacked all up and down the streets.

"Mrs. Whistler had not been very well lately, and they suddenly made up their minds to go to Brittany, or Normandy, or somewhere on the coast. It was not altogether a successful journey. Nature had gone back on him, he told me, in speaking of it, probably because of his exposure of her 'foolish sunsets'; the weather was for tourists—the sea for gold-fish in a bowl—the studio was better than staring at a sea of tin. And the terrible things they had eaten in Brittany made them ill. But the lithographs at Vitré were made, also the *Yellow House, Lannion,* and the *Red House, Paimpol;* his first elaborate essays in colour.

"Only a few impressions of the *Yellow House* were ever pulled, owing, it is said, to some accident to the stone. One of these I wanted to buy. Whistler heard of it. 'Well, you know, very flattering, but altogether absurd,' he told me, and the print came with an inscription and the Butterfly."

CHAPTER XXXVIII. PARIS CONTINUED. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN NINETY-THREE TO EIGHTEEN NINETY-FOUR

AFTER this summer, we both of us saw still more of Whistler, whenever we were in Paris. At the Rue du Bac, we were always struck by the small number of French artists at his Sunday afternoons and the predominance of Americans and English. Indeed, it always seemed to us that French artists might have been more cordial and the French nation more responsive to the fact that so distinguished a foreign artist had come to live in France. During his lifetime at least one or two Americans, one a rich amateur, were made Commanders of the Legion of Honour, while he remained an officer. Others were made foreign Members of the Academy of Fine Arts, but this, the highest honour available for artists in France, was never offered to him.

With a few French artists his relations were friendly, Boldini, Helleu, Puvis de Chavannes, Rodin, Alfred Stevens, Aman-Jean. But the greater number were content to express their appreciation at a distance. Mrs. Whistler spoke little French, which, naturally, was an impediment to closer intercourse, though, as will presently be seen, another reason for this want of cordiality is given by Mr. Walter Gay, whose knowledge of social life in Paris is far greater than ours. Some of the Frenchmen of whom Whistler saw most were not painters. Viélé-Griffin, Octave Mirbeau, Arsène Alexandre, the Comte de Montesquiou, Rodenbach were among

those who were to be met at the Rue du Bac. Old friends, M. Drouet and M. Duret, were sometimes there, though not very often; his intimacy with them and M. Oulevey was not really renewed until after Mrs. Whistler's death. But of all who came, none endeared himself so much to Whistler as Stéphane Mallarmé, the poet, critic, friend and sincere admirer. Once, at Whistler's suggestion, he visited us in London, and, looking from our windows to the Thames, declared he could understand Whistler the better. Official people strayed in from the Embassies, mostly English. American authors and American collectors appeared on Sundays. Mr. Howells, once or twice, came with his son and daughter, of whom Whistler made a lithograph. Journalists, English and American, had a way of wandering in.

On the other hand, English and American artists dropped in to the garden at the Rue du Bac daily and in numbers. The younger men of the Glasgow school came, more especially James Guthrie and John Lavery. Then there were the Americans living in Paris: Walter Gay, Alexander Harrison, Frederick MacMonnies, Edmund H. Wuerpel, John W. Alexander, Humphreys Johnston, while Sargent and Abbey rarely missed an opportunity of calling at the Rue du Bac. If Whistler welcomed artists of standing, he was hardly less cordial to students who were serious in their work. Milcendeau has told us how, taking his work—and his courage—with him, he went to see Whistler, but reaching the door stood there trembling at the thought of meeting the great master and showing his drawings. As soon as Whistler saw the drawings, his manner was so charming—as if they were just two artists together—that fear was forgotten, and Whistler ultimately proved his interest by inviting Milcendeau to send the drawings to the International. Whistler met American and English students not only at the Rue du Bac but at the American Art Association in Montparnasse, then

a bit of old Paris : a little white house with green shutters, which the street had long since left on a lower level, and, at the back, a garden where under the great trees the cloth was laid in summer ; just the house to please Whistler. He often went to the club's dinners and celebrations. At one dinner on Washington's Birthday, after the popular professors and politicians had delivered their speeches, he was unexpectedly called upon to speak. It came as an inspiration, he said, and he contrasted the conditions in the schools on the two sides of the Channel :

> " Tradition in England has not yet been recognised, and you go as you please. In France, where tradition is respected, the student at least is taught which end of the brush should go on the canvas and which in his mouth, but in England—well—there it is purely a matter of taste."

Mr. MacMonnies remembers another evening :

> " A millionaire friend of Whistler's and mine spoke to me of giving a dinner to the American artists in Paris, or rather to Whistler, and inviting the Paris American artists. I dissuaded him, by saying they all hated one another and would pass the evening more cheerfully by sticking forks into one another under the table if they could. Better to invite all the young fry—the American students. He gladly went into it. You can imagine the wild joy of the small fry, who had, of course, never met Whistler. Some got foolishly drunk, others got bloated with freshness, but they all had a rare time, and Whistler, who sat at the head, more than any, and he was delightfully funny. The millionaire was enchanted, and also a distinguished American painter, who sat opposite to Whistler, and who was much respected by the youth. At one pause, he said : ' Mr. Whistler, I went to the Louvre this morning '—pause—all the youths' faces wide open, expecting pearls of wisdom and points—' and I was amazed ! '—pause—everybody open-eared—' to see the amazing way they kept the floors waxed ! ' "

A story is told of his going, one day at lunch time, into the court of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, and finding himself

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followed by a line of students solemnly keeping step and looking at everything he did. He continued his walk, and so did they, and they bowed each other out at the gate, before they knew who he was. But American students of the *Quartier* are said almost to have mobbed him, climbing over everything to see him, when he went to their restaurant.

Whistler was recognised, looked up to, by the Americans of the new generation, and was personally loved and respected by them, just as his work filled them with respect and admiration. Mr. Walter Gay, whose reputation as a distinguished artist was then already made, and who felt the extraordinary charm of the man and the importance of his work, writes us :

"I first knew Whistler in the winter of '94, when he was established in Paris, with the recently married Mrs. Whistler, in his apartment of the Rue du Bac. The marriage was a happy one ; she appreciated fully his talent, he adored her, and when she died a few years later, was crushed at her loss. In spite of the great influence exercised by Whistler on contemporary art, he was never lionised in Paris as he had been in London ; Paris is not the place for lions ; there are already too many local celebrities. With few exceptions, the French artists did not frequent him. I remember Duez saying *à propos* of Whistler's slight relations with his French *confrères : 'Il vaut mieux croire au Christ que de le voir.* Perhaps one of the reasons why the French artists held aloof from Whistler was Mrs. Whistler's very British attitude towards that nation. Once, at a dinner of French artists given at our house in honour of Whistler, Mrs. Whistler expressed the most Gallophobe sentiments, complaining loudly of the inhospitality of the French towards her husband. Whistler's social circle in Paris consisted of Mallarmé, Robert de Montesquiou, Viélé-Griffin and Théodore Duret, one or two American artists, and a large following of American art students. He had a great charm for youth ; the society of young people brought out his best qualities, and they were fascinated by his personal magnetism. He used to give delightful breakfasts in the Rue du Bac, the table always tastefully decorated by the master of the house with dainty 'arrangements' in old 'blue and white,' in eighteenth-century silver and flowers—everywhere in the apart-

ment the touch of the man of taste was visible. Whistler was subtle to a degree: he had a finesse rarely found in the Anglo-Saxon race. Although well over sixty years when I knew him—[he was just sixty in 1894]—he had the enthusiasm and energy of the early years. His very handsome grey-blue eyes still sparkled with the fire of youth—they were young eyes in an old face. I think it strange that no one ever seems to emphasise his singular beauty. Not only were his features finely cut, but the symmetry of his figure, hands and feet, retained until late in life, was remarkable; in youth he must have been a pocket Apollo. I never thought Whistler's wit of a high order; it was not spontaneous. His conversational powers were, however, extraordinary—he had a Celtic richness of vocabulary. But he was intensely amusing on the subject of his quarrels, and these afforded full opportunity for his undoubted eloquence. As precious as was his fame, artistic and literary, to him, his famous fights, both with tongue and pen, seemed to arouse even deeper sentiments. His anger at Du Maurier, for the not too amiable sketch of him in the first edition of *Trilby*, was violent enough. But the Sir William Eden case stirred the very depths of his being. When relating the oft-told tale to me, he used to grasp my arm with such frenzy, in order to impress his point upon me, that he almost seemed to mistake me for the offending Baronet. His combativeness may be traced directly to his Irish blood. But besides atavistic pugnacity, another *casus belli* was his super-sensitiveness to any kind of criticism. Those who were either indifferent or antipathetic to him, his imagination instantly transformed into hidden enemies. That weakness of the artistic temperament, *la folie de la persécution*, was deeply rooted in his nature. The South African War was also a burning topic with him for many months. He was, of course, pro-Boer in his sympathies, as, in any conflict in which England had been engaged, he would have been sure to have ranged himself on the side of her adversary. This ungracious attitude towards England was, I think, partly pose, partly caused by the English inability to appreciate his subtlety. And yet Whistler would never have attained his prestige as a celebrity had he not lived in London.

"No one can realise, who has not watched Whistler paint, the agony that his work gave him. I have seen him, after a day's struggle with a picture, when things did not go, completely collapse, as from an illness. His drawing cost him infinite trouble.

PORTRAIT OF MISS KINSELLA

Rose and Green, The Iris

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I have known him work two weeks on a hand, and then give it up discouraged. It was no uncommon thing for him to require eighty to a hundred sittings for a portrait. His painting-table was a curious study, meticulously laid out, and scrupulously neat. My last interview with Whistler took place in the spring of 1903, in London, about two months before his death. Hearing that he was far from well, I went to see him, and found that the rumour was only too well grounded. I spent the afternoon with him—he was singularly gentle and affectionate, and clung to me pathetically, as though he too realised that it was to be our last meeting in this world.

"Whatever his detractors may charge against him, it seems to me that Whistler's faults and weaknesses sprang from an unbalanced mentality; he was a *déséquilibré*, the common defect of great painters. The unusual combination of artistic genius, literary gifts and social attractions which made up Whistler's personality, was unique; there was never anybody like him. And there is another quality of his which must not be forgotten in the summing up of his character: underneath all his vagaries and eccentricities, one felt that indefinable yet unmistakable being—a gentleman."

Mr. Alexander Harrison shows a very different side of Whistler in the following note:

"I chanced to call upon him an hour after he had received the news of his brother's death, and with quivering voice and tears in his eyes, he told me that he considered me a friend, and told me the sad news, and asked me to dine with him. My meetings with him were frequent and friendly. On one occasion, in a moment of excitement I had the audacity to tell him that I felt that he ought to have acted differently *vis-à-vis* a jury of reception. His eyes flamed like a rattlesnake's, and I apologised, but insisted and then dodged a *little*. I afterwards realised that my naïve frankness had not lowered me in his esteem, as to the last he was nice to me—having realised that my admiration for his work was no greater than my affectionate regard for his sensitive and courageous human temperament—at times a child of impulsiveness.

"I have never known a man of more sincere and genuine impulse even in ordinary human relations, and I am convinced that no man ever existed who could have been more easily controlled

on lines of response to a 'fair and square' appreciation of his genuine qualities. When off his guard, he was often a pathetic kid, and I have spotted him in bashful moods, although it would be hard to convince the *bourgeois* of this. Wit, pathos, gentleness, affection, audacity, acridity, tenacity, were brought instantly to the sensitive surface like a flash, by rough contact."

Now that Whistler was well established, for life as he hoped, in a fine studio, he was making up for the unsettled years that followed his marriage. He began a number of large portraits in the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs. In 1893, Mr. A. J. Eddy, known, we believe, to fame and Chicago as the man Whistler painted, asked Whistler to do his portrait. He could stay in Paris only a few weeks, and Whistler liked his straightforward American frankness in saying that his portrait must be done by a certain date, and, though unaccustomed to be held by any limitations of time, Whistler agreed to the conditions. His description of Mr. Eddy was, "Well, you know, he is the only man who ever did get a picture out of me on time, while I worked and he waited!" Mr. Eddy writes of a sitter, no doubt himself, who was with Whistler "every day for nearly six weeks and never heard him utter an impatient word; on the contrary, he was all kindness." And Mr. Eddy describes Whistler painting on in the twilight, until it was almost impossible to distinguish between the living man and the figure on the canvas. He revels in the memory of those "glorious" days he spent in the studio, of the pleasant hour at noon when painter and sitter breakfasted there together, or of the prolonged sittings, and the dinner afterwards at the Rue du Bac, or in one of the little Paris restaurants, where no Parisian was more at home than Whistler. But steadily as the work went on, the picture was not sent to Chicago until the following year. Mr. J. J. Cowan, whose portrait also dates from this time, tells us that for *The Grey Man*, though it is a small

STUDIES FOR "WEARY"
(*Charcoal Drawings*)

BROOKLYN

WEARY
(*Dry-point*)

picture, he must have given Whistler about sixty sittings, averaging each three to four hours. He, like Whistler, was not in a hurry. The last sittings were in London, three years after the picture was begun. It always seemed as if the head needed just the one touch, with the sitter there, so that perfection might be assured.

The portraits of women were more numerous, and they promised to be as fine as those of the 'seventies and 'eighties. But the work was interrupted by the tragedy of Whistler's last years, and the more important were never completed. Two have disappeared. For one of these, Miss Charlotte Williams of Baltimore, sat, of whom, nevertheless, a rare lithograph exists. The other lost portrait was a large full-length of Miss Peck of Chicago, now Mrs. W. R. Farquhar, which we saw often, in many stages, and at last, it seemed to us, finished. Miss Peck was painted standing, in evening dress, with her long white, green-lined cloak thrown back, a little as he had painted Lady Meux. It was full of the charm of youth, and the colour was a harmony in silver and green. Miss Kinsella, a third American girl who first posed in the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, and afterwards in Fitzroy Street, London, secured her portrait after Whistler's death, when it was a mere phantom of its former self, painted over and over, and yet left unfinished, though it still conveys an impression of the first splendid beauty of the picture, and the charm of the colour scheme, *Rose and Green,* remains. We saw it in the Fitzroy Street studio when it was so perfect that one more day's work seemed to us a danger. But Whistler scraped it out and painted it over ruthlessly, never satisfied, always striving to improve, though nobody could help, at one moment, feeling that to change anything must be to the picture's disadvantage. In no other portrait did he ever paint flesh with such perfection. Face and neck had the rich golden quality of a Titian, with a subtlety of modelling

beyond even the Venetian master. One day, when E. went to the studio, he had just scraped down neck and bust for no other reason she could discover than because he could not get the hand to come right with the rest of it. It was to be lovelier than ever, he said. It retains but a shadow of its old loveliness. When M. Rodin saw it at the London Memorial Exhibition, he praised neck and bust as "a beautiful suggestion of lace," so badly disfigured by scraping and repainting had this most perfect piece of flesh-painting become. Portraits of Mrs. Charles Whibley were in progress about the same time: *L'Andalouse, Mother of Pearl and Silver,* now the property of Mr. John H. Whittemore, the unfinished *Tulip, Rose and Gold,* and *Red and Black, The Fan.* Two others of this period are of Mrs. Walter Sickert, *Green and Violet,* the second for which she sat, and Lady Eden, *Brown and Gold,* destined to make more talk than any other picture he ever painted. He was also painting his own portrait in the white jacket which was changed into a dark coat after Mrs. Whistler's death.

The large canvases had to be left when he shut the studio door behind him, but wherever he went, he could carry his little portfolio of lithographic paper and box of chalks, and, during those two or three years, he developed the art of lithography as no one had before, he and Fantin-Latour being the two chief factors in the revival of lithography during the 'nineties. He was determined, he said, to make "a roaring success of it." In the streets and at home in the Rue du Bac, everywhere and at all hours, he was making his drawings, and the result is the series of lithographs of the shops and gardens and galleries of Paris, and the many portraits, especially of his wife. His interest in the technical side of it was tireless. He continued to be indefatigable in his experiments with transfer paper and in his pursuit of old paper for printing. Drawings and proofs were continually going

and coming between Paris and London, where the Ways were now doing almost all the transferring and printing for him, and friends were never allowed to go from the Rue du Bac on their return to England, without being entrusted with a package for the lithographers. He was deep, too, in his experiments with colour, and a few of the lithographs for *Songs on Stone,* already announced by Mr. Heinemann, were at last done. But they were printed in Paris by Belfont, whose shop was closed in 1894, printer and stones vanished, and this was the end of the proposed publication. Since Whistler's death, mysterious prints, in black-and-white, from some of the stones have appeared in Germany. But only a few prints in colour remain, no two alike, for they were really trial pulls of different colours. He had looked for great things: "You know, I mean them to wipe up the place before I get done," he said, and their loss was a severe disappointment. Other lithographs, made then or later, were published in the *Studio,* the *Art Journal,* the *Architectural Review, L'Estampe Originale,* and one in our *Lithography and Lithographers.* He never wanted to keep his work, no matter in what medium, from the public. With the many commissions and experiments that were keeping him busy in Paris, Whistler was truly, as he wrote to us in London, working from morning to night, and in a condition for it he wouldn't change for anything. He was compelled to change it only too soon.

CHAPTER XXXIX. TRIALS AND GRIEFS. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN NINETY-FOUR TO EIGHTEEN NINETY-SIX

IN 1894, interruptions came to the happy condition of things in the studio, some slight, but one so grave that life and work were never quite the same to Whistler again.

One of the smaller annoyances was caused by Du Maurier's novel *Trilby*, which was appearing in *Harper's Magazine*. Du Maurier represented the English students at Carrel's (Gleyre's) as veritable Crichtons, while Whistler, under the name of Joe Sibley, was held up to ridicule. Du Maurier's drawings left no doubt as to the identity of his model, for there, in one, is Whistler, a full-length figure, wearing the well-known *chapeau bizarre* over his curls. Du Maurier was not content with this. Another drawing shows Whistler as the first to run away in a studio fight, and the text is as offensive. Joe Sibley is

> " 'the Idle Apprentice,' the King of Bohemia, *le roi des truands*, to whom everything was forgiven, as to François Villon, *à cause de ses gentillesses* . . . always in debt . . . vain, witty, and a most exquisite and original artist . . . with an unimpeachable moral tone . . . also eccentric in his attire . . . the most irresistible friend in the world as long as his friendship lasted—but that was not for ever ! . . . his enmity would take the simple and straightforward form of trying to punch his ex-friend's head; and when the ex-friend was too big, he would get some new friend to help him. . . . His bark was worse than his bite . . . he was better with his tongue than his fists. . . . But when he met another joker, he would just collapse like a pricked bladder. He is now perched on such a topping pinnacle (of fame and

notoriety combined) that people can stare at him from two hemispheres at once."

Whistler was the more indignant because Du Maurier had been his friend for years, and he wrote in protest to the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Du Maurier, in an interview which followed, expressed surprise at Whistler's indignation. He thought the description of Joe Sibley could only recall some of the good times they had had together in Paris, and he seemed amazed that Whistler did not delight in it. He claimed that he himself was one of Whistler's victims, and quoted from Sheridan Ford's pirated edition of *The Gentle Art:*

> "It is rather droll. Listen: 'Mr. Du Maurier and Mr. Wilde happening to meet in the rooms where Mr. Whistler was holding his first exhibition of Venice etchings, the latter brought the two face to face, and, taking each by the arm, inquired, "I say, which one of you two invented the other, eh?"' The obvious retort to that, on my part, would have been, that, if he did not take care, I would invent *him*, but he had slipped away before either of us could get a word out. . . . I did what I did in a playful spirit of retaliation for this little jibe about me in his book."

The Editor of *Harper's* had not understood the offensive nature of the passages. Once Whistler called Messrs. Harper's attention to it, they apologised:

> "If we had had any knowledge of personal reference to yourself being intended, we should not have permitted the publication of such passages,"

and the apology was inserted in the January number of the Magazine (1895). The name was changed to Anthony and the objectionable passages altered when the story appeared as a book. Whistler, consulted beforehand, was satisfied. But, as he said:

> "Well, you know, what would have happened to the new Thackeray if I hadn't been willing? But I was gracious, and I gave my approval to the sudden appearance in the story of an

Anthony, tall and stout and slightly bald. The dangerous resemblance was gone. And I wired—well, you know, ha! ha! —I wired to them over in America, 'Compliments and complete approval of author's new and obscure friend, Bald Anthony!' "

When *Trilby* was burlesqued at the Gaiety, Whistler was brought on the stage as *The Stranger*. His hat, overcoat, eyeglass, curls and cane were fairly well copied, but no one paid the slightest attention, and *The Stranger*, we believe, never appeared after the first night.

Many people thought Whistler over-sensitive. But the success of 1892 had brought him the sort of attention in print he least cared for, and was least willing to submit to. Despite the steps he took in the case of Du Maurier, he was constantly annoyed by what he considered perversions of his character and his work. He was sometimes mistaken, as in the case of a *Bibliography*, compiled in 1895 for the *State Library Bulletin* of the University of the State of New York. It was undertaken in appreciation of him as artist, but it contained inaccuracies and it quoted as authorities critics he objected to, and he was, unfortunately, more vexed by it than there was really any need to be. Another source of annoyance was, a little later, an unsigned article in *McClure's Magazine*, entitled *Whistler, Painter and Comedian*. He demanded an apology and suppression of the article, and both were granted with the same courtesy shown by Messrs. Harper. And so it went on to the very end, and he was continually coming upon references to himself, disfigured by misunderstandings and, as he thought, misrepresentations and malice.

All these worries occupied Whistler's time and tried his temper. But they faded into nothing when he was overwhelmed, late in 1894, by a trouble infinitely more serious and tragic. His wife was taken ill with the most terrible of diseases—cancer. They came to London to consult the Doctors in December. Part of the time they stayed at Long's

LANDSCAPE

(Study for Lyme Regis)

Hotel in Bond Street, Mrs. Whistler now surrounded by her numerous sisters, the two Paris servants, Louise and Constant, in attendance; part of the time Mrs. Whistler was under a doctor's care in Holles Street, and Whistler with his brother and his brother's wife in Wimpole Street. Those who loved Whistler would like to forget his misery during the weeks and months that followed. We saw much of him. Work was going on somehow: not the paintings, for they waited in the Paris studio, but lithography was an unfailing resource to him. He made many lithographs: a portrait of Lady Haden, a drawing in Wellington Street, and others here and there. But he told Mr. Way afterwards that he wanted them destroyed, he should not have worked when his heart was not in it—"it was madness on his part." He brought proofs to show us. Almost every afternoon he would come, and take J. to Way's, where the lithographs were being transferred to the stone and printed. He would lunch and dine with us, always keeping up his brave outward appearance, though we could not help knowing what was in his heart. He had been in his "palatial residence" barely two years, when it was closed, and the canvases were left untouched in the "stupendous studio." New honours and new successes followed fast upon the triumph of 1892—in 1894, the Temple Gold Medal from the Pennsylvania Academy, in 1895 a Gold Medal from Antwerp, too many, indeed, to follow. And it was now, just as fortune rose on the horizon, that the blow fell, and new and heart-breaking responsibilities were heaped upon his shoulders.

The Eden trial, which struck many as an unnecessary and almost farcial episode in his life, distracted him during the most tragic months, and his persistent tenacity over a matter comparatively trivial may have been, as we have heard it suggested, due to his endeavour to escape from the fears that haunted him. His work practically ceased for weeks and

weeks at a time, and he forced himself to almost unnatural concentration on the details of the case. His journeys to Paris were frequent of necessity, and his correspondence with people whom he wanted to consult and whose opinion he wished to influence was enormous. The case was fought out in the civil courts of France, which unfortunately allowed Whistler no opportunity of giving personal testimony. The object of the case is probably known to most people. It arose out of the uncertainty as to the price which Sir William Eden should pay for his wife's portrait. He was introduced to Whistler by Mr. George Moore, to whom Whistler had mentioned one hundred to one hundred and fifty pounds for a sketch in water-colour or pastel. Whistler became interested in his sitter, and produced a very fine little oil painting, to which, under other circumstances, he would have attached a far higher value than the sum suggested. His irritation, therefore, can be understood when Sir William Eden attempted to make him accept in payment as "a valentine"—for it was paid on February 14—the sum of one hundred guineas. Whistler felt that it should have been left to him, the artist, to decide. He refused to give up the picture, and he returned the money only when legal proceedings were taken by "the Baronet." Before the case came into court, he went so far as to wipe out the portrait, which, of course, prejudiced him in the eyes of the judge.

Whistler was in Paris for the trial before the Civil Tribunal on March 6 (1895). His advocates were Maître Ratier, by whose side he sat in court, and Maître Beurdeley, a collector of his etchings. Sir William Eden did not appear. Whistler was ordered to deliver the portrait as originally painted, a penalty to be imposed in case of undue delay; to refund one hundred guineas, the price of the portrait; to pay in addition one thousand francs damages. The judgment went on to

assert that he was in honour bound not to interfere with the portrait after he had completed it, and to make it clear that an artist, however prominent, must carry out his contract.

To Whistler, this judgment seemed unfair, and he decided to appeal against it in the Cour de Cassation, which dragged the matter on until after the great blow of Mrs. Whistler's death had fallen. History repeats itself, and it is curious to note that though, in England, " An Artist " tried to raise a fund to pay the expenses of the trial, in order " to show in some practical form artists' appreciation for the genius of James McNeill Whistler," the effort, responded to by only one other artist, Mr. Frederick MacMonnies, was as unsuccessful as after the Ruskin trial in 1878.

Throughout the Eden affair, Mr. George Moore had been prominent ; the go-between when the portrait was commissioned, Sir William Eden's ally in the legal business, a conspicuous figure in the various newspaper controversies. After the trial Whistler wrote to him a scathing letter on the part he had played. George Moore's answer was to twit Whistler with old age. This was published in the *Pall Mall Gazette* and reprinted in the French papers. Whistler was living in France and had therefore no alternative but to send George Moore the challenge which, in the French code of honour, was inevitable. Whistler's seconds were M. Octave Mirbeau and M. Viélé-Griffin. Their challenge remained unheeded, and reporters hurrying to George Moore's chambers in the Temple found him flown. London was once more amused, and looked upon the challenge as Whistler's crowning joke. It was no joke to Mr. Moore, who was sufficiently conversant with French manners to know how his silence must be interpreted in Paris. Whistler's seconds sent a *procès verbal* to the press, to state that they had waited eight days for an answer, and, not having received one, they considered their mission terminated.

Thus, before the world, Whistler kept up the game, though in the Rue du Bac life was a tragedy. Mrs. Whistler had returned more ill than ever. Miss Ethel Birnie Philip was married from the house early in the summer to Mr. Charles Whibley, and her sister, Rosalind, took her place in the household.

After the trial, Whistler went back to work as best he could, interesting himself in galleries and exhibitions. He sent *The Little White Girl* to the International Exhibition at Venice; he exhibited the new portrait of Mrs. Sickert at the Glasgow Institute; he chose six lithographs for the Centenary Exhibition to be held in Paris the following autumn. A little head of "Carmen," his model, was ready for the Portrait Painters. When, in the late summer, he returned to England, and, with Mrs. Whistler, settled down for the fall at the Red Lion Hotel in Lyme Regis, he arranged for a show of his own lithographs in London. The Society of Illustrators, of which he was a Vice-President, was preparing an anthology, *The London Garland,* edited by W. E. Henley, illustrated by members of the Society, and published by Messrs. Macmillan and Co. At the first appeal from J. he agreed to contribute an illustration to a sonnet of Henley's, with the intention of making an original drawing for the book. But, in the end, he had to abandon this plan and merely allowed a Nocturne to be reproduced. He went on with his lithographs at Lyme Regis, and made an extraordinary series, in which appear the glowing forges, the dark stables, with horses an animal painter would envy, and the portraits of the smith and the landlord. "Absolute failures, some," he told us sadly; "others, well, you know, not bad!" Two of the pictures painted there are masterpieces: *The Little Rose of Lyme Regis* and *The Master Smith.* In these, he always said he really had solved the problem of carrying on his work as he wished to until it was finished, and, technically, they are as accomplished as any-

THE LITTLE ROSE OF LYME REGIS

thing he ever did. It was then also he painted the only large landscape we know of: a few white houses of the little town with the hillside and trees beyond.

While he was at Lyme Regis the news came of the prize awarded him in Venice. Several prizes in money were given in different sections, for different subjects, to artists of different nationalities. Whistler was awarded the prize of two thousand five hundred francs, offered by the City of Murano, which happened to come seventh in the list. He knew his "enemies," foresaw the prattle there would be of the seventh-hand compliment paid him, and forestalled this by explaining in the press how the prizes had been awarded, his being equal in importance to the first, the only difference being that it came from another source.

The exhibition of his lithographs was held in December (1895). Seventy were shown, mostly the work of the last few years, and J. wrote the introduction to the catalogue, the only time he allowed anybody to "introduce" him in this fashion. There were no special decorations, but the prints were all in frames of his designing. English artists had been interested in lithography because they were asked to contribute to the Centenary Exhibition in Paris, and, at the call of Leighton, they tried their hands at it, more or less unsuccessfully. The contrast was great between their work, shown at Mr. Dunthorne's gallery, and Whistler's, whose prints alone are probably destined to live.

Whistler derived but little pleasure from this triumph. The winter was spent in moving from place to place. At one moment his plans were made to go to New York to consult an American doctor, he forgetting as well as he could what he called "the vast far-offness" of America, so impressive to him hitherto when the journey had been thought of. In London, they stayed first at Garlant's Hotel in Suffolk Street; then in apartments, Half Moon Street; at De Vere Gardens

Hotel, Kensington ; and at the Savoy. Work of one sort or another marked these changes : much work in many mediums at Lyme Regis ; the lithograph, *Kensington Gardens*, while he was at the De Vere Hotel ; those most pathetic portraits of his wife in lithography, *The Siesta* and *By the Balcony*, and the lithographs of the Thames from the hotel windows, at the Savoy. He had during the first months no studio in London. He worked for a while in Mr. Walter Sickert's ; Mr. Sargent lent his to Whistler early in 1896, when there was talk of a lithograph of Cecil Rhodes and a portrait of Mr. A. J. Pollitt, of whom he made a lithograph, though the painting, which was splendidly begun later in Fitzroy Street, was afterwards destroyed.

He still found time to interest himself in the experiments of others. In the winter of 1895 J. was asked by the *Daily Chronicle* to edit the illustration of a series of articles on London in support of the County Council, then Progressive. It was an event of importance to illustrators, process men and printers : the first effort in England for the elaborate illustration of a newspaper. The *Daily Graphic* was illustrated, but its draughtsmen were trained to adapt their drawings to the printer. The idea now was to oblige the printer to adapt himself to the illustrator. Every illustrator of note in London contributed. Burne-Jones' frontispiece to Morris' *News from Nowhere* was enlarged and printed successfully. J. asked Whistler to let him try the experiment of enlarging one of the Thames etchings. Whistler was interested. *Black Lion Wharf* was selected from the *Thames Set*, and was printed in the *Daily Chronicle*, February 22, 1895, the very day of the month, Washington's Birthday, when, ten years later, the London Memorial Exhibition of his work was opened. With its publication, the success of the series was complete, not politically, for the twenty-four drawings were said to have lost the Progressives twenty-five seats,

but artistically. The etching stood the test of enlarging superbly, silencing any doubts of Whistler as draughtsman.

Whistler came to us almost daily, especially during his stay at the Savoy, in 1896, when we were neighbours. Late one afternoon he brought his lithographic paper, and made a portrait of J. as he sprawled comfortably, and uncomfortably had to keep up the pose, in an easy-chair before the fire. Whistler made four portraits in succession of J. and one of E., each the work of an afternoon. He worked on into the darkness, especially in the portrait of E., done while the firelight flickered on her face and on his paper. He told us he had taken a studio in Fitzroy Street, so that he could paint a large full-length portrait of J. in a Russian cloak—*The Russian Schube*—which he thought it probable the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts might like to have. But J. was called away from town, Mrs. Whistler grew rapidly worse, and the scheme was dropped, never to be taken up again.

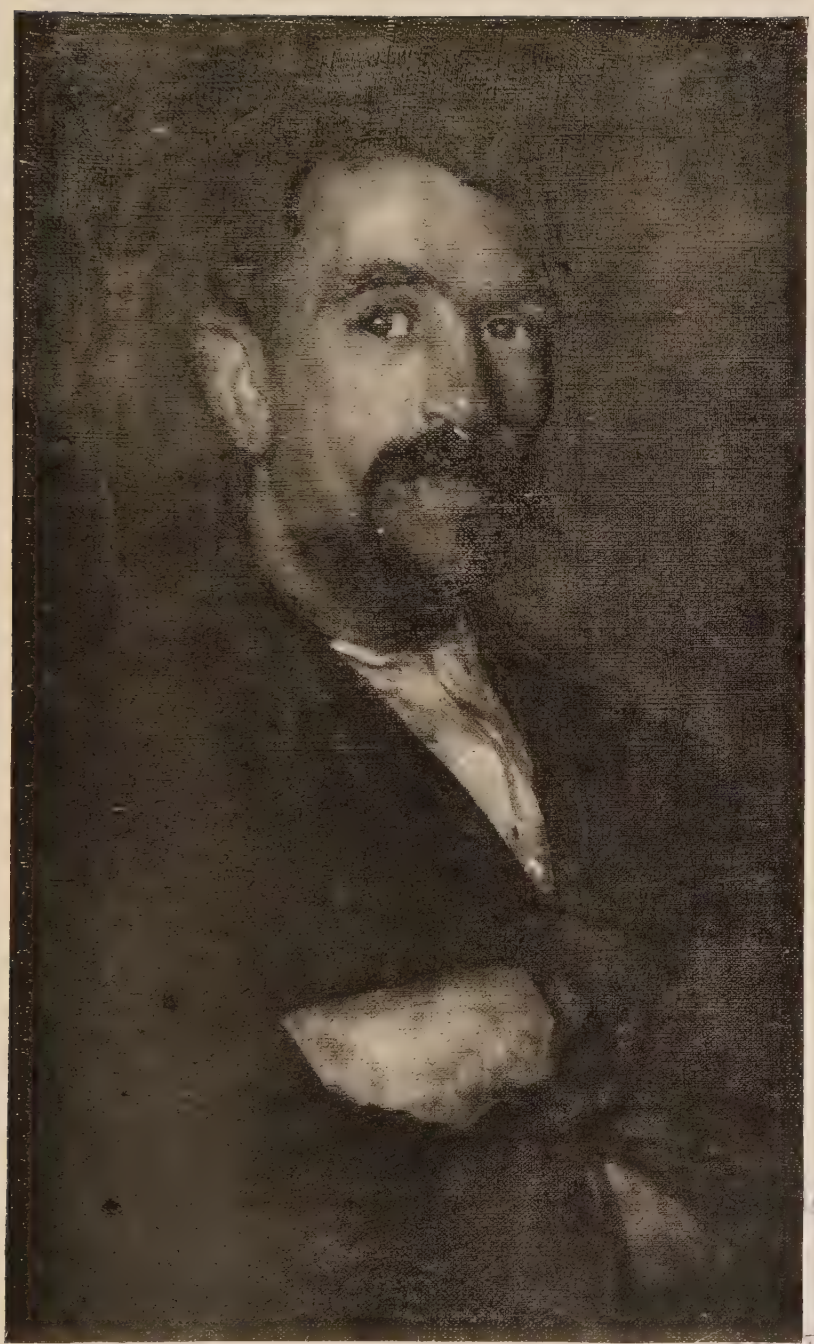
On other afternoons he and J. would go to Way's, where the new Savoy drawings were put on the stone. One, however, the large lithotint of *The Thames*, was done on a stone sent to him at the hotel. Old drawings made in Paris, Lyme Regis, London, were taken up on the stone, and gone all over with chalk and stump and scraper. He worked in a little drawing-room adjoining Mr. Thomas Way's office, the walls of which were covered with pastels and water-colours by him and Holloway. There he drew the portraits of Mr. Thomas Way, as he stood, lit by the fire alone, and also subjects seen from the windows, working until dark, when Mr. Way would bring out some rare old liqueur, and there was a rest before Whistler hurried back to the Savoy. His nights were spent mostly in sitting up with his wife. He slept a little in the morning, and usually returned to us in the afternoon, and there were times when he seemed so exhausted that we wondered if the end were not nearer for him than for Mrs. Whistler.

The studio at No. 8 Fitzroy Street was a huge place at the back of the house, one flight up, and reached by a ramshackle glass-roofed passage. The portrait of Mr. Pollitt was started and one of Mr. Robert Barr's daughter, which also has disappeared. Mr. Cowan sat again for his, and one was begun of Mr. S. R. Crockett, who has sent us, in reply to our inquiries concerning his sittings, the following interesting letter:

"Alas! I never keep letters, that being (though not from your present point of view) my only virtue. I have none, therefore, of Whistler's. He usually wrote on scraps of brown paper of various shapes, cut by himself from the surroundings of panels. I may find some of these when I get my files undone. If so, you shall have them. He confined himself, however, with curious parsimony of words, to indications as to where we were to lunch. Whistler was good enough to ask me to lunch every day on the terms of what he called a 'Jersey treat,' that is, we were each to pay for ourselves! This was, however, difficult for the waiter, to whom Whistler explained with unmoved countenance that I had really eaten nine-tenths of the meal and should be charged accordingly. 'You have only to look on that picture,' he said, pointing at me, 'and on this!' Finally, we compromised by paying for our lunches day about. And I hunted up decent places to take 'the Master.' I felt the honour, I can assure you, and I had to take my davy that the wine did not cost more than three shillings a bottle. 'No wine ought to,' was his dictum, and at Kettner's, and that place in Great Portland Street with a name like Brentano's (which it isn't), and in the little French *café* at the back of the Savoy, I had to go down every day early and arrange with the *maître d'hôtel* to swear the wine was two bob a bottle. 'Then just send me two dozen of that, will you?' said Whistler. And I had to settle the difference, which was the joke on me.

"But I enjoyed it, as you know. I don't think he liked me at first. Some one had told him I was a Philistine of Askelon. But afterwards we got on like a pair of brothers—even better—and he would permit himself to be wrapped up and looked after while with me.

"He told me lots about his early times in London and Paris—



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THE MASTER SMITH OF LYME REGIS

but all in fragments—just as the thing occurred to him. Like an idiot, I took no notes. Lots, too, about Carlyle and his sittings, as likely to interest a Scot. He had got on unexpectedly well with True Thomas, chiefly by letting him do the talking, and never opening his mouth, except when Carlyle wanted him to talk. Carlyle asked him about Paris, and was unexpectedly interested in the *cafés*, and so forth. Whistler told him the names of some—Riche, Anglais, Véfour, and Foyot and Lavenue on the south side. Carlyle seemed to be mentally taking notes. Then he suddenly raised his head and demanded, 'Can a man get a chop there?'

"Concerning my own sittings, he was very particular that I should always be in good form—'trampling,' as he said—otherwise, he would tell me to go away and play. He was great on telling me that I must go away from London. It would be death to me, he said. Only musical people and artists had any right to come there, and they only to make money. What else was he there for?

"Mr. Unwin had arranged for a simple lithograph, but Whistler said he would make a picture like a postage stamp, and next year all the exhibitions would be busy as ant-hills with similar 'postage stamp' portraits. 'Some folk think life-size means six foot by three—I'll show them!' he said more than once. I wanted to shell out as he went on, and once, being flush (new book or something), I said I had Fifty Pounds which was annoying me, and I wished he would take it. He was very sweet about it, and said he understood. Money burnt a hole in his pocket, too, but he could not take any money, as he might never finish the work. Any day his brush might drop, and he could not do another stroke.

"It was a bad omen! His wife grew worse. He sent me word not to come. She died, and I never saw him after. I wish you could tell me what became of that picture. He called it *The Grey Man*."

This is another example of Whistler's endless repetition of titles. Mr. Cowan's was *The Grey Man* too. Of Mr. Crockett's portrait, Whistler said to us that Crockett was delighted with it as far as it had gone, and he was rather pleased with it himself.

At this time, a little earlier or a little later, Whistler painted

several of these small full-lengths, which were to show the fallacy of the life-size theory and the belief that the importance of a portrait depended on the size of the canvas. Mr. E. G. Kennedy stood for a second after the one destroyed in Paris; Mr. Arnold Hannay for another; Mr. C. E. Holloway for *The Philosopher*, which Whistler considered particularly successful, and which was bought, before his death, by the Countess de Béarn in Paris.

In the spring, Whistler moved his wife from the Savoy to St. Jude's Cottage, Hampstead Heath. It was then he began to give up hope. There was one sad day, just before the end, when he came to see us, and for the first time admitted the worst. "We are very, very bad," he kept repeating. Mr. Sydney Pawling, on the morning of her last day, met him walking, running almost, across the Heath, looking at nothing, seeing no one. Mr. Pawling, however, alarmed at his appearance, stopped him. "Don't speak! Don't speak! It is terrible!" he said, and was gone.

Mrs. Whistler died on May 10, and was buried at Chiswick. We were both abroad, but on the first Sunday after our return, a few days later, he came to see us and asked E. to go with him to the National Gallery. There he showed her the pictures his "Trixie" loved, standing long before Tintoretto's *Milky Way*, her favourite. On this occasion there was no talk about pictures—Canaletto was barely looked at—there was no talk about anything, and the tragedy that could not be forgotten for a moment by either was, as if by tacit understanding, never even referred to. But M. Paul Renouard was in the Gallery and came to Whistler with a word of condolence, which was the most painful thing of all to him. During the first few months after Mrs. Whistler's death, in the first shock of his sorrow and loss, Whistler made her sister, Miss Rosalind Birnie Philip, his ward and drew up a new will appointing her his heiress and executrix.

CHAPTER XL. ALONE. THE YEAR EIGHTEEN NINETY-SIX

WHISTLER stayed for a short time in Hampstead with his sisters-in-law. He then went to live with Mr. Heinemann at Whitehall Court, where he remained, on and off, for two or three years, spending only the periods of Mr. Heinemann's absence at Garlant's Hotel. He was with us day after day throughout the summer. Little notes were despatched from the studio to ask if we would be in and alone in the evening and, if so, he would dine with us. At first, he would not join us if we expected anybody else. He liked to sit quietly and talk to us, he said, but he could not risk meeting other people. He was seeing few, outside the studio, except Mr. Heinemann, Mr. E. G. Kennedy, and ourselves. We all went occasionally to the studio, and often he and J. sketched together in the London streets.

For these sketching expeditions, Whistler prepared beforehand the colours he wanted to use, and if the day turned out too grey or too radiant for his scheme, nothing was done. The chosen colours were mixed and little tubes, filled with them, were carried in his small paint-box, which held also the tiny palette with the pure colours he employed arranged on it, his brushes, and two or three small panels. Many studies were started. The most important was one of St. John's, Westminster. He loved the little quiet old corner, now almost entirely destroyed, and he went there several times. He worked away with his top hat jammed down on his nose, sitting on the usual three-legged sketching-stool,

the box on his knee, the panel in it, beginning at once with colour on the panel, usually finishing the work in one afternoon, though he took two over this church. The painting was simply done, commencing with the point of interest, the masses put in bigly, the details worked into them. Just as in the studio, five minutes after he had begun, he became so absorbed in his picture that he forgot everything else, until it grew too dark to see. Save for the preparation of the colours, there was really no difference in his way of sketching out of doors from that of any other painter.

He made one or two little journeys during the summer, one to Rochester and Canterbury with Mrs. Whibley and Miss Birnie Philip. But, disgusted with the inns and the food, he hurried back after a day or so. Another longer and more successful trip was with Mr. E. G. Kennedy, who writes us:

"It was agreed that Whistler and myself should go to France for a short time. Neither of us had any idea of *where* we were going except to Havre. When we arrived in the early morning, several Americans, who had come to Southampton by the American Line, were on board. Two cheap-jacks, with their hats on three hairs, were looking over the side at the curious colour of the water. One of them said to the other, 'There must have been a hell of a wash here yesterday, Bill!' The water *did look* like suds, and Whistler enjoyed the characteristic exclamation immensely. After he got shaved at Havre and had coffee, we took the boat to Honfleur, which, as you know, has a tidal service there. 'Do you know where we are going?' I said to him.—'No, I don't,' said he.—'Well,' said I, 'there is a white-whiskered, respectable-looking old gentleman; perhaps he knows the lay of the ground. You speak French like a native; tip him a stave.'

"So Whistler asked him about hotels in Honfleur. There were two, it seemed, the Cheval Blanc on the quay, and the Ferme de St. Siméon on the outskirts of the town. The Cheval was so dirty that I got the only cab, and, piling the luggage on it with ourselves, drove off to the farm. Fortunately, there were two vacant rooms, and we stayed there for a week. The cooking was excellent,

and, of course, *Madame* knew who *Monsieur Vistlaire* was. Whistler used to kick up a row every night with me about the 'ridiculous British,' to divert his mind, I imagine, and sometimes my retorts were so sharp that I said to myself, 'All is over between us now.' But he used to bob up serenely in the morning, as if nothing had happened, and, after *déjeuner*, he would take his small box of colours, &c., and paint in the Cathedral or large church, whichever it is. I used to stroll about the town and look in occasionally to see that Whistler came to no harm. It was here that he said he was going over to Rome some day, and when I said, 'Don't forget to let me know, so that I may be on hand to see you wandering up the aisle in sackcloth and ashes, with a candle in each hand, or scrubbing the floor!' he said, in a tone of horrified astonishment, 'Good God! O'K.,* is it possible? Why, I thought they would make me a hell of a swell of an Abbot, or something like that.'

"It was amusing to see him manœuvre to get near the big kitchen fire, purple overcoat on. He was a true American, particularly in his liking for heat, and the way he would sidle into the kitchen, which opened on out of doors, all the time mildly flattering *Madame*, was very characteristic. We went to Trouville one day—a dull hole then—on the diligence, and had a capital *déjeuner* at the *Café de Paris*, before which Whistler said, 'We must do this *en Prince*, O'K.!'—'All right, your Highness, I'm with you!' Afterwards, when on the beach, he went to sleep on a chair, leaning back against a bath-house, and his straw hat tipped on his nose. It was funny, but sleep after luncheon was a necessity to him, as you know. Coming back to London, in the harbour of Southampton, after listening to the usual unwearying talk against the British, I said, 'Oh, be reasonable!'—'Why should I?' said he."

Later on, there were a few days at Calais, in the Meurice, Sterne's Hotel, where, however, he was too blue and miserable to be kept even by work.

It was very slowly that Whistler recovered his balance, and journeys helped him less than the quiet hard-working

* Whistler never lost his fancy for inventing names for his friends, and O'K. was the one he found for Mr. Kennedy, rarely calling him by any other either in conversation or in correspondence.

days in the studio where, by degrees, he returned to the pictures and schemes so sadly interrupted. We remember his coming to us with Mr. Kennedy on a late Sunday afternoon, bringing with him, up our long three flights of stairs, *The Master Smith* to show it to us once again before it was sent off to America. Mr. Kennedy had captured it, seeing its perfection, fearful of one unnecessary touch being added. It was placed on a chair for the short time it stayed with us, Whistler, facing it on another chair, miserable at the thought of parting with it. There was always for him a sharp wrench when he let a picture leave the studio.

After a while he did not mind meeting a few people. A man he liked to see was Timothy Cole. There was a great scheme that he should make a series of drawings on wood and that Cole should engrave them. It was all worked out in our rooms and in the studio, where Cole brought the blocks prepared for him to draw on. But that is the last we or Cole ever heard about them, though we saw the blocks frequently at Fitzroy Street. Mr. Cole says:

> "I did not speak to him more than once after I had given him the wood blocks. I did not think it prudent to press him about the matter, fearing he might get disgusted and give it up. . . The blocks were the size of the *Century* page, 8½ by 5½."

The small blocks which we have reproduced were drawn by Whistler and his wife, of course, before this. Mrs. Whistler etched two of the subjects. The third, a portrait, is, evidently, his own work. And the other two were made by him on the backs of the blocks. Cole also gave him some of his own prints, and they pleased Whistler very much, though he rarely cared to own the pictures and prints of other artists. Once when an etcher sent him a not very wonderful print, he tore it up, saying, "I do not collect etchings—I make them!" With the exception of his portrait by Boxall, we never saw a scrap of anybody else's

work in his studio or his house. He also often said, "I do not collect the works of my contemporaries!" Besides his art, there was another side to Mr. Cole—his endless practical jokes. He used to do extraordinary things, to Whistler's amusement.

Professor John Van Dyke was in London, toward the end of August or beginning of September, and Whistler was always willing to come and dine when he was with us. A long darn in a tablecloth afterwards bore witness to the animation of one of these dinners—Whistler's knife brought down sharply on the table to emphasise an argument. The subject was Velasquez and *Las Meniñas*, which he had never seen, which everybody else had seen. Velasquez stood just as in the picture when he painted it, he maintained; we could not agree with him. Perspectives and plans were drawn on the unfortunate cloth, chairs were pulled back in the heat of the discussion, the situation grew critical. Whistler was forced to yield step by step, when, of a sudden, his eyes fell on Van Dyke's feet in the long, pointed shoes, then the American fashion, their point carried to a degree of fineness no English bootmaker could rival, "My God, Van Dyke, where did you get your shoes?" Whistler asked. Of course, we could not go on fighting after that; defeat was avoided. Though Whistler had never been in Spain, it seemed as if he had seen the pictures at Madrid, so familiar was he with them, and though, as in this case, he was at times not right about them, his interest was endless. We remember "Bob" Stevenson telling him, to his great delight, how, one summer day in the Long Gallery of the Prado, where *Las Meniñas* then hung, an old peasant with faded blue-green clothes came in, sitting down on the green bench in front, and straightway became part of the picture, so true was its atmosphere.

Another evening Claude was the subject—Claude compared to Turner. Whistler could never see the master whom

Englishmen adored in Turner. This was not from prejudice against Ruskin, for Mr. Albert Greaves told us that years before the Ruskin trial, at Lindsey Row, Whistler " reviled Turner." Mr. Cole in 1896 was making engravings after some of the Turners in the National Gallery, and Whistler insisted on " their inferiority to the Claudes, so amazingly demonstrated in Trafalgar Square, where Turner had invited the comparison disastrous to him." The argument again grew heated, and Whistler adjourned it until the next morning, when he arranged to meet J. and Cole in the National Gallery. As he compared the pictures of the two artists which hang side by side as Turner wished, he said,

> " Well, you know, you have only to look. Claude is the artist who knows there is no painting the sun itself, and so he chooses the moment after the sun has set, or has hid behind a cloud, and its light fills the sky, and that light he suggests as no other painter ever could. But Turner must paint nothing less than the sun—and he sticks on a blob of paint—let us be thankful that it isn't a red wafer as in some of his other pictures—and there isn't any illusion whatever, and the Englishman lifts up his head in ecstatic conceit with the English painter, who alone has dared to do what no artist would ever be fool enough to attempt! And look at the architecture: Claude could draw a classical building as it is; Turner must invent, imagine architecture as no architect could design it, and no builder could set it up."

They went on to the Canalettos and Guardis that Whistler never wearied of looking at, more especially Canaletto's great big red church and the little interior of the Rotunda at Vauxhall, with the wonderful little figures, from which Hogarth learned so much. But before Whistler could finish pointing out the similarity between his own work and Guardi's the talk came to a sudden end, for half the copyists in the room had left their easels. This annoyed Whistler, and he went no further. He would not talk to an audience which he was not sure was sympathetic. Sure of sympathy, how-

A FRESHENING BREEZE

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ever, he never tired in his praise of the luminosity of Claude, the certainty of Canaletto, the wonderful tones and handling of Guardi, the character and colour of Hogarth. Another Italian about whom he was always enthusiastic was Michael Angelo Caravaggio, especially his pictures in the Louvre. Whistler always maintained that the exact knowledge, the science, of the Old Masters was the reason of their greatness. The modern painter has a few tricks, a few fads, he said; they give out, and nothing is left. Knowledge is inexhaustible. Titian was painting in as masterly a manner in his last years as in his youth. And speaking of the cleverness —a term he hated—of the modern man, he said,

> "Think of the finish, the delicacy, the elegance, the repose of a little Terborg, Vermeer, Metsu. These were masters who could paint interiors, chandeliers, and all the rest—and what a difference between them and the clever little interiors now the fashion!"

In the autumn, Whistler established Miss Birnie Philip and her mother in the Rue du Bac and returned to Mr. Heinemann's flat at Whitehall Court, now making it so entirely his home that before long he was laughingly alluding to "my guest Heinemann." It is not likely that the two would ever have parted had not the latter married, but even then, Whistler often stayed with him as long as his health remained good, curiously dependent on this friendship formed late in life with a man many years his junior. When Mr. Heinemann was away he complained that dull London was duller and blacker than ever. Whistler shrank from any expression of condolence offered him in his great grief, or from inquiries even that would revive the memories of those terrible weeks, and at Whitehall Court he knew he was safe from the danger. His host was careful to warn all who came never to allude to that time, or we would invite Whistler to us if anybody expected at Whitehall Court was likely to jar. After three or four years Mr. Heinemann's married

life ended abruptly, and Whistler at once suggested that they should go back to the old way of living. Mr. Heinemann took another flat at Whitehall Court, similar to his first, with this in view. But Whistler was already doomed, and, before the plan could be realised, he was dead.

In the autumn of 1896, Mr. Henry Savage Landor, back from Japan and Korea, was also staying with Mr. Heinemann —" a rare fellow, full of real affection," Whistler said of him. They sat up for hours together, after everybody had gone to bed. Whistler slept badly, and Mr. Landor can do with less sleep than most people. There was a skull in the drawing-room that, Mr. Landor tells us, Whistler would sketch over and over again, while they talked to three, four, five o'clock in the morning. Once or twice, when they drew the curtains, it was day, and Whistler dressed, breakfasted, and went straight to the studio. He brought us stories of Mr. Landor, the simplicity with which he would start for the end of the earth as if for a saunter along Piccadilly, " leaving the costume of travel to the Briton crossing the Channel " ; or, in the light shoes of everyday wear, " outwalk the stoutest shod gillie over the Scotch moors." Then Whistler brought us Mr. Landor, with whom our friendship dates from the morning when, at Whistler's request, he sat, Japanese fashion on the floor in the front of our fire, a rug wrapped round him as kimono, and devoured imaginary rice with pencils for chopsticks. When Mr. Landor had his horrible experiences in Thibet, and the story of his tortures was telegraphed to Europe, Whistler was one of the first to send him a wire in his joy that Landor had escaped.

Whistler also took a fancy, while in Whitehall Court, to Mr. Heinemann's brother, Edmund, who was, Whistler said, " something in the City," whom he christened the " Napoleon of Finance " and described as " sitting in a tangled network of telegraph and telephone." He never had invested

money before, and it was with pride that he deposited at the bank his first "scrip," bought for him by Mr. Edmund Heinemann, and collected his "half-crowns" as dividends.

Evening after evening he would stay in the studio until he could see no longer, keeping dinner waiting at Whitehall Court, so that no time could ever be fixed for the meal. Arriving, he would first insist on mixing cocktails, an art in which he excelled and which must have dated back to the time when he "stayed away" from the Coast Survey. If it did not suit him to dine at Whitehall Court, he would write or telegraph to say he could dine with us if we liked, or that he had amazing things to tell us, should he come?—or that he was sure we were both wanting to see him. Or he would drive straight from the studio in the late afternoon and stay on, arriving sometimes before the notes he had forgotten to send, or with the wires unsent still in his pocket; almost the only time we have known him willingly not to dress for dinner. On rare occasions, he came in after we had dined, and still demanded the *fortune du pot* of our small establishment, and was always content, no matter how meagre that fortune might prove, though if it included "a piece of American cake" or anything sweet he was the better pleased. He grumbled only over our Sunday evening supper, which was cold in English fashion, out of deference to an old English servant. Then he would even bring Constant, his valet, model and cook, to make him an onion soup or an omelette. Constant was succeeded by a little Belgian maid called Marie, who was supposed to look after the studio, and who, when he stayed at Garlant's and we dined with him there, would be summoned to dress the salad and make the coffee. It was not long after this that, by the doctor's advice, he gave up coffee and stopped smoking too. Few men ever ate less than Whistler, but few were more fastidious about what they did eat. He made the best of our English cooking

while it lasted, but he was glad when our English servant was succeeded by Augustine, who was French and who could make the soups, salads and dishes he liked, and who did not hesitate to " scold " him when he was late and ruined the dinner.

These meetings must have been pleasant to Whistler as to us; there were whole weeks when he came every evening. On his arrival he might be silent. As the minutes went on, however, and after he had had the inevitable nap, he would start talking and his talk was as good on the last evening he ever spent with us as on the first. We shall always regret that we made no notes of what he said, though the charm of his talk must have eluded even the shorthand reporter. In " surroundings of antagonism," he wrapped this talk as well as himself in " a species of misunderstanding " and deliberately mystified, bewildered, and aggravated the company. But when the disguise was no longer necessary, and he talked at his ease, he impressed us with his sanity of judgment, breadth of interest, and keenness of intellect. His reading was extensive, though we never ceased to wonder where he found time for it. His talk sometimes abounded in quotations, more especially from the Bible, that " splendid mine of invective," as he once described it. His diversity of knowledge was as unexpected as his extensive reading and we felt that he must know things intuitively, just as by some uncanny faculty he was sure to hear everything said about him. While he liked to hold the floor, and was at his best when he did, he was ready for argument. " I am not arguing, I am telling you," he would say, and he would lose his temper, which was violent, but he was friendlier than ever when it was all over. And so, the shadow of sorrow ever in the background, the evenings went by that winter in the little dining-room which had been Etty's studio, where his huge Edinburgh pictures were painted.

The Eden affair was still dragging on, and Whistler's disappointment was great to find artists as afraid to support him now as at the Ruskin trial. One day in Bond Street, he met a Follower, just returned to town, arm-in-arm with the "Baronet." The Follower at once left a card at Fitzroy Street. Whistler wrote "Judas Iscariot" on the card, and sent it back. A few weeks later, the New English Art Club hung Sir William Eden's work, and with it, he said, their shame, upon their walls. He complimented them, much to their discomfort, on their appetite for "toad." To clear the air, which had become sultry in the art clubs and studios, we invited Professor Fred Brown and Mr. D. S. MacColl to meet him one evening at dinner, and discuss things. Professor Brown had another engagement. Mr. MacColl came, and Whistler, who did not mind how hard a man fought, if he fought at all, continued on pleasant terms with him always. But the New English Art Club he never forgave.

A show of J.'s lithographs of Granada and the Alhambra was arranged at the Fine Art Society's during December 1896, and, for the catalogue, Whistler wrote an introductory note of appreciation. He designed the cover to Mr. Charles Whibley's *Book of Scoundrels*, and also two covers for novels by Miss Elizabeth Robins, all three books published by Mr. Heinemann. The design for the *Book of Scoundrels* was a gallows, drawn in thin lines, with rope and noose attached. W. E. Henley, to whom it was shown, asked whether the gallows should not have been drawn with a support. Whistler's comment was :

> "Well, you know, that's the usual sort of gallows, but this one will do. It will hang all of us. Just like Henley's selfishness to want a strong one!"—

an allusion to Henley's gigantic frame.

During the winter Whistler met Sir Seymour Haden for

the last time at a dinner given by the Society of Illustrators (of which both were Vice-Presidents) to Mr. Alfred Parsons, on his election to the Royal Academy. It was Whistler's first appearance in public since his wife's death, and as we had persuaded him to go, never anticipating any such meeting, we were annoyed to think that we had exposed him to the unpleasantness of it. However, as soon as Whistler saw Sir Seymour Haden, he seemed to wake up and to begin to enjoy himself. His laugh carried far. Haden must have heard it and may have seen his ostentatious display of three monocles on the dinner table. Certainly, the fish had not been served when Haden whispered something to Sir James D. Linton, President of the Society, and left the room. Later Whistler was called upon to make a speech and could not get out of it. But it seemed an anti-climax. The real event of the dinner for him had come earlier in the evening.

At Christmas, he went with Mr. and Mrs. T. Fisher Unwin and ourselves to Bournemouth, where our hotel was an old-fashioned inn, selected from the guide-book because it was the nearest to the sea. We breakfasted in our rooms, we met at lunch to order dinner, and the rest of the day Whistler insisted must be spent in getting an appetite for it—wandering on the cliffs, he with his little paint-box. But the sea was on the wrong side, the wind in the wrong direction, and he could do nothing. On some days we took long drives. One damp, cold, cheerless afternoon we stopped at a small inn in Poole. The landlord, watching Whistler sip his hot whisky-and-water, was convinced he was "somebody," but was unable "to place" him. "And who do you suppose I am?" Whistler asked at last. "I can't exactly say, sir, but I should fancy you was from the 'Alls!" Aubrey Beardsley was then at Boscombe, a further stage reached in his brave fight with death, and we went to see him. But even the sight of the suffering of others was too cruel a reminder to Whistler, and it was

BEACHING THE BOAT

(Harmony in Blue and Silver)

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characteristic of him at this moment that he shrank from going with us.

Dinner was the event of the day, and it would have proved generally a disaster had he not seen humour in his being expected to eat it, so little was it what Whistler thought a dinner should be. On Christmas Day he was melancholy and stared in silence at the turkey and bread sauce, the boiled potatoes and soaked greens:

> "To think of my beautiful room in the Rue du Bac—and the rest of them there, eating their Christmas dinner, having up the wonderful old Pouilly from my cellar!"

But we had something else to talk about. In the *Saturday Review* of that week, December 26, there was an article, signed Walter Sickert, that for many reasons was of interest to us all.

CHAPTER XLI. THE LITHOGRAPHY CASE. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN NINETY-SIX TO EIGHTEEN NINETY-SEVEN

MR. SICKERT'S article was ostensibly inspired by the show of J.'s lithographs of Granada at the Fine Art Society's. Whistler's great interest in it is explained by the fact that he understood it to be an attack upon himself, as well as upon J., whose lithographic drawings alone it pretended to deal with. Whistler's method of work has already been described. As a rule, his lithographs were made on lithographic paper and transferred by Mr. Way to the stone. The article argued that to pass off drawings made on paper as lithographs was as misleading to " the purchaser on the vital point of commercial value," as to sell photogravures for etchings, which, when Sir Hubert Herkomer had done so, led to a protest from J., and also from Mr. Sickert whose condemnation then had been strong. The article, therefore, was written either ignorantly or maliciously, for no such distinction in lithography has ever been made. Transfer paper is as old as Senefelder, the inventor of lithography, who looked upon it as the most important part of his invention. The comment amounted to a charge of dishonesty, and an apology was demanded. The apology was refused by Mr. Frank Harris, editor of the *Saturday Review*, and consequently Messrs. Lewis and Lewis brought an action for libel against writer and editor.

The action stood in J.'s name, of course, and Whistler was the principal witness. In the hope that the matter

might be settled by a suitable apology and without appeal to the law, Mr. Heinemann arranged a meeting between the editor of the *Saturday Review* and Whistler. But nothing came of it. People who knew nothing of lithography got involved in the case, and our old friend Harold Frederic, for one, enrolled himself inexplicably with the enemy. Others were found to know a great deal whom we should never have suspected of the knowledge, and through Whistler we discovered that Mr. Alfred Gilbert started life as a lithographer, was indignant with the *Saturday Review*, and was only too willing to offer his services to us. Meetings followed on Sunday evenings in the huge Maida Vale house, where Mr. Gilbert was trying to revive mediæval relations between master and workman, and live the life of a craftsman with pupils and assistants: a brave experiment, if it ended in failure.

The case was fixed for April 1897, the most inconvenient time of the year for the artist who exhibits. Whistler was working on the portrait of Miss Kinsella, and he had promised three pictures to the Salon: *Green and Violet*, *Rose and Gold*, and a Nocturne. M. Helleu, who was over in London, had them catalogued and measured, reserving the necessary space on the walls. Only a few days before sending in were left and the work could never be done in time, Whistler was in despair. It was then, too, he learned that C. E. Holloway, the model for *The Philosopher*, a distinguished artist whom the world never knew, was ill in his studio near by. Holloway was anything but a successful man and Whistler was shocked to find him in bed, lacking nearly every comfort. He provided doctors, nurses, medicine, and even food, and looked after the dying man's family. He spent afternoons in Holloway's little bedroom.. All this took up much time and made it more difficult than ever to get his pictures ready for the Salon.

He called one morning on his way to the studio to tell us

of the death of Holloway. He was going to the funeral and was already suggesting a scheme for a fund to purchase some of the pictures and give the proceeds to the family. He was nervous and worried, with the Salon clamouring for his work on the one hand, and the trial claiming him on the other. People, he complained, did not seem to understand the importance of his time. Things were amazing in the studio and he was expected to leave them to go into court. No, he wouldn't, that was the end of it. His pictures must be finished. J. said to him :

> " The case is as much yours as mine, and you must come. Your reputation is involved. There will be an end to your lithography if we lose. You must fight."

Whistler, if in the wrong, liked a friend the better for the contradiction he was popularly supposed unable to bear, and his answer was,

> " Well, you know, but really—why, of course, Joseph, it's all right. I'm coming, of course, we'll fight it through together. I never meant not to. That's all right."

And to E., who went with him to the " Temple of Pomona " in the Strand, to order flowers for Holloway, he kept saying,

> " You know, really, Joseph mustn't talk like that ! Of course it's all right. Of course, I never meant not to come. You must tell him it's all right. I never back out ! "

But his work was stopped. The pictures did not go to Paris.

The case was tried in the King's Bench Division, on April 5, before Mr. Justice Mathew. We were represented by Sir Edward Clarke and Mr. Eldon Bankes. Whistler arrived early. In the great hall, he met the counsel for the other side, Mr. Bigham, an acquaintance, and leaning on his arm, entered the Court—" capturing the enemy's counsel on the way," he said as he sat down between us and Sir George Lewis.

THE PHILOSOPHER
(Rose and Brown)

J., in the witness-box, simply pointed out that he had made lithographs both on paper and on stone; that there was no difference between them; that this was an historical fact which he was able to prove; that for the defendants to deny that a lithograph made on paper was as much a lithograph as a lithograph made on stone, showed that they knew nothing about the subject, or else were acting out of malice.

Whistler was called immediately after. He said his grievance was the accusation that he pursued the same evil practice. He was asked by Mr. Bigham if he was very angry with Mr. Sickert, and he replied he might not be angry with Mr. Sickert, but he was disgusted that

> "distinguished people like Mr. Pennell and myself are attacked by an absolutely unknown authority (Mr. Sickert), an insignificant and irresponsible person."

Then, said Mr. Bigham, Mr. Sickert is an insignificant and irresponsible person who can do no harm? Whistler answered,

> "Even a fool can do harm, and if any harm is done to Mr. Pennell, it is done to me. This is a question for all artists."

And he added that Mr. Sickert's pretended compliments and flatteries were a most impertinent piece of insolence, tainted with a certain obsequious approach.

Further asked if this was his action, he said,

> "I am afraid if Mr. Pennell had not taken these proceedings, I should."
> "You are working together, then?"
> "No, we are on the same side."
> "Are you bearing any part of the costs?"
> "No, but I am quite willing."

Sir Edward Clarke then interposed and asked if there was any foundation for that question.

> "Only the lightness and delicacy of the counsel's suggestion."

At the end of the cross-examination, Whistler adjusted his eye-glass, put his hat on the rail of the witness-box, slowly pulled off one of his gloves after the other. He turned to the judge and said,

"And now, my lord, may I tell you why we are all here?"

"No, Mr. Whistler, we are all here because we cannot help it!"

And Whistler left the box. What he meant to say no one will ever know. We asked him later. He shook his head; the moment for saying it had passed.

Mr. Sidney Colvin, as Keeper of the Print Room of the British Museum, testified that no difference was made in classifying lithographs done on paper and lithographs done on stone; Mr. Strange, of the Art Library, South Kensington, corroborated this; Mr. Way and Mr. Goulding, professional lithographic printers, gave evidence to the same effect. And Mr. Alfred Gilbert kept his promise of appearing in our support.

Mr. Bigham, in defence, said that the issues in the case were not of any serious consequence to the pocket or the reputation of anybody, and that the defendant had written in faith and honesty, with the simple desire to express his honest opinion on the work he had criticised, and that he did not impute any dishonest or improper motive. This was a storm in a teacup blown up by Mr. Whistler.

Mr. Macaskie, for the proprietor of the *Saturday Review*, said that he did not even know why he had been drawn into this artistic squabble.

Mr. Sickert began by protesting that he was familiar with all the processes of lithography; that the plaintiff's lithographs were not lithographs but, as a matter of fact, mere transfers. He had submitted the article to another paper, which refused it before it was accepted by the *Saturday Review*. He had been under the impression that the plaintiff

would like a newspaper correspondence. He was actuated by a pedantic purism. Cross-examined by Sir Edward Clarke, he had to admit, by implication, that he intended to charge the plaintiff with dishonest practices, and that he had caught Mr. Pennell, the purist, tripping. He had to admit also that the only lithograph he ever published was made in the same way, and he had called it, or allowed it to be called, a lithograph.

Mr. Sickert's witnesses scarcely helped him. Mr. C. H. Shannon's testimony was more favourable to us than to him. Mr. Rothenstein testified that all the lithographs he had published were done exactly as Whistler and J. had done theirs. Mr. George Moore solemnly proclaimed that he knew nothing about lithographs, but that he knew Degas. "What's Degas ?" said the judge, thinking some new process had been sprung on him, and Mr. Moore vanished. The proprietor of the *Saturday Review* acknowledged that he had published, as recently as Christmas, an illustrated supplement full of lithographs done on transfer paper and advertised by him as lithographs ; also that he had not known what was in Mr. Sickert's article until it appeared.

Mr. Bankes, in summing up for us, said that without doubt the plaintiff was charged with dishonesty ; that the attack was equally injurious and bitter both on the plaintiff and Mr. Whistler ; that the plaintiff had been used as a stalking-horse for Mr. Whistler.

The judge said that a critic might express a most disparaging opinion on an artist's work and might refer to him in the most disagreeable terms, but he must not attribute to the artist most discreditable conduct, unless he could prove that his charge was true. If the jury thought the criticism merely sharp and exaggerated, they would find a verdict for the defendant, but if not—that is, if it was more than this—they should consider to what damages the plaintiff was entitled.

The verdict was for the plaintiff—damages, fifty pounds: not a high estimate of the value of artistic morality on the part of the British jury, but, at least, in so far as it carried costs, higher than the estimate put upon it in the Ruskin trial.

So convinced, however, were the other side of a verdict in their favour, that a rumour reached us of a luncheon ordered beforehand, on the morning of the second day, by the editor of the *Saturday Review* to celebrate our defeat. We waited to be sure. Then we carried off Whistler, Mr. Reginald Poole, who had conducted the case for us, and Mr. Jonathan Sturgis to the Café Royal for our breakfast. Whistler was jubilant. and nothing pleased him more than the deference of the foreman of the jury who waylaid him to shake hands at the close of the trial.

CHAPTER XLII. THE END OF THE EDEN CASE. THE YEAR EIGHTEEN NINETY-SEVEN

AFTER our trial, Whistler went to Paris and Boldini painted his portrait, shown in 1900. It was done in a very few sittings. Mr. E. G. Kennedy, who went with Whistler several times, says that Boldini's method was astonishingly sure and rapid, that Whistler frequently got tired of doing what he had made other people do all his life—pose —and that he used to take little naps. During one of these, Boldini made a dry-point of him on a zinc plate. Whistler did not like it, nor did he like any better Helleu's dry-point half-length of him in the Boldini pose. Of the painting, Whistler said to us, " They say that looks like me, but I hope I don't look like that ! " It is, however, a wonderful presentment of him in his very worst mood, and Mr. Kennedy remembers that he was in his worst mood all the while he posed. It is the Whistler whom the world knew and feared.

When Whistler got back to London, in May or June, he went to Garlant's Hotel, where Mr. Kennedy was staying. Mr. Kennedy's relations with Whistler commenced with the selling of Whistler's prints and pictures in New York, and soon developed into a close and intimate friendship, which continued until almost the end of Whistler's life. Kennedy was one of Whistler's first and foremost champions in America, devoted and loyal, though the friendship ended rather abruptly through a regrettable misunderstanding on Whistler's part. After Whistler's death, Mr. Kennedy was mainly

responsible for the fine exhibitions at the Grolier Club and the catalogue.

Every now and then this summer, Whistler went on short visits to Hampton where Mr. Heinemann was living in a "cottage." Whistler never liked the country, but, he said,

> "I suppose now we'll have to fish for the little gudgeon together in a chair, with painted corks, like the other Britons."

As a matter of fact, he took part in all the fun there. He went to regattas, picnicked, and allowed himself to be rowed and punted about. At Hampton he first met Mr. William Nicholson, whom Mr. Heinemann had asked down with a view to his adding a portrait of Whistler to the series that began with his enormously successful woodcut of Queen Victoria. Mr. Nicholson, later on, in the Fitzroy Street studio, made his studies of Whistler in evening dress, the pose and the place of the figure in the design recalling somewhat Whistler's own arrangement in the *Sarasate*.

It was the summer of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Whistler could not come to us from his hotel that June without passing through streets hung with tawdry wreaths and festoons, and Trafalgar Square buried in a mass of platforms, seats, and builders' advertisements, with Nelson on his column just peering above the scaffolding. The decorations were an unfailing source of amusement to him, an excuse for a new estimate of "the Island and the Islander," and the talk about the British which became habitual during his last years and was an annoyance, we are afraid, to some of his friends and more of his "enemies." One evening he sketched for us his impression of the Square, with Nelson "boarded at last." "You see," he said, "England expects every Englishman to be ridiculous," and the sketch afterwards appeared in the *Daily Chronicle* much to his satisfaction, but little to the public's.

In July he took a short journey with us. We were starting to bicycle across France to Switzerland, and the evening before he, Mr. Kennedy, and M. Boldini dined with us. It happened that Boldini was to cross the Channel by the same boat, and Whistler, who always loved the trip to Dieppe, and hated to be left alone, decided that he and Kennedy must go too. A good deal has been written and said of the discomfort of having Whistler as a fellow traveller. Our experience was very different. He attracted attention, it is true, but this he did wherever he went. He had long since given up the old extravagances of dress. But there was something in the length and cut of his overcoat, in the tilt of his flat-brimmed silk hat, or jaunty straw, over his eyes, that was peculiar to himself and that forced people to look at him. And his way of leaning on the arm of anybody who happened to be with him to walk the shortest distance, made him no less conspicuous. On this occasion, he arrived at the station so late that the rest of the party were reduced to a state of nervous anxiety. But once we had started, he was the best company in the world, he himself enjoying every minute of the journey, especially on the boat, where he ran across a group of "enemies" greatly to their embarrassment. He had hardly arrived at Dieppe before the small paint-box was unpacked, and he was in the street hunting for a little shop-front he remembered. It was characteristic that first he had to find another kind of shop where he could buy a rosette of the Legion of Honour, for his had been lost or forgotten, and he would have thought it wanting in respect to appear without one in France. The only shadow to the pleasure of the afternoon was when the shopkeeper, to whom he had explained his loss, said, "All right, *Monsieur*, here is the rosette, but I have heard that story before." However, after the first irritation, even Whistler had to laugh. One other incident was characteristic. We had only our cycling costumes, we were staying at

the Hotel Royal, and Whistler was always most punctilious in the social ceremonial of life. When he came down to dinner, very late, of course, he was correct in evening dress, the rosette in place, and we thought there was just a suggestion of hesitation. But it was only a suggestion. At once he gave his arm to E., who was in short cycling skirt, and as we went into the dining-room he turned to her, and, to a question that had never been asked, answered, "*Mais, oui, Princesse,*" as who should say, royalty can do no wrong. He was down to see us off in the morning. "Well, you know, can't I hold something?" he offered, as E. mounted her bicycle, and afterwards, as he watched us wheel along the sea-front, he told Mr. Kennedy, "After all, O.K., there's something in it!"

In the autumn, Whistler was again in Paris, and the Eden case, in the Cour de Cassation, was fixed for November 17. It was heard before President Périvier, Maître Beurdeley for the second time defending Whistler. Mr. Heinemann came over especially from London, and was with him in court. Judgment was given on December 2. The affair, in the meanwhile, had been talked about, and the court was crowded. The judgment went as entirely in Whistler's favour as, in the Lower Court, it had gone against him. He was to keep the picture, on condition that he made it unrecognisable as a portrait of Lady Eden, which already had been done; Sir William Eden was to have the hundred guineas back, which already had been returned, and 5 per cent. interest; Whistler was to pay forty pounds damages with interest and the costs of the first trial, and the Baronet to pay the costs of appeal. Mr. MacMonnies, who also was with Whistler in court, writes us:

"Whistler was very much tickled at having added a clause to the *Code Napoléon*—to the effect that a work of art was the property of the artist until it had passed out of his hands (I believe that was it). During the trial, it was decided by the judges that

MASTER STEPHEN MANUEL
(*Arrangement in Grey*)

the picture should be produced when needed. (Mr. Whistler had asked me to sit beside him.) Mr. Whistler whispered in my ear 'MacMonnies, take the picture and get out with it.' As we sat under the judges' noses, and the court room was packed with admirers and enemies of his, and court officials, I made a distinct spot as I walked down the aisle with *the* picture under my arm. And Whistler showed his admirable generalship in the case, as no one of the *gendarmes* could stop me. So all anybody could do was to watch it disappear out of the door."

Afterwards, Whistler's account to us was that the *Procureur de la République* had been splendid; that the whole affair was a public recognition of his position; that the trial made history, established a precedent, proving the right of the artist to his own work; that a new clause had been added to the *Code Napoléon*—he had "wiped up the floor" with the Baronet before all Paris, which was his intention from the first. He wished it to be widely known that in the law records of France his name would go down with Napoleon's:

"Well, you know, take my word for it, Joseph, the first duty of a good general when he has won the battle is to say so, otherwise, the people always dull—the Briton especially—fail to understand, and it is an unsettled point in history for ever. Victory is not complete until the wounded are looked after and the dead counted."

The trial over, he at once proposed to Mr. Heinemann to make "a beautiful little book" of it, and he began to arrange the report with his "Reflections" for publication. During many months proofs of *The Baronet and the Butterfly* filled his pockets. As he had read pages of the *Ten o'Clock* to Mr. Alan S. Cole, so he read pages of *The Baronet and the Butterfly* to us, and sometimes to the Council of the International after the meetings, a mistake, for there were members who had not the intelligence to understand it—or him. His care with this book was no less than with *The Gentle Art.* Every word in the marginal notes, every Butterfly, was a matter of

thought and arrangement. " Beautiful, you know—isn't it beautiful ? " he would say, when a page or a paragraph specially pleased him—and nothing pleased him more than the Butterfly following the " Reflection " on page 43. There he quotes Mr. George Moore :

> " I undertook a journey to Paris in the depth of winter, had two shocking passages across the Channel and spent twenty-five pounds. All this worry is the commission I received for my trouble in the matter."

Whistler's " Reflection " was !

> " Why ! damme sir ! he must have had a Valentine himself—the sea-saddened expert."

This was followed by the Butterfly he thought " splendid—actually rolling back with laughter, you know ! " A new feature was the toad printed just above the dedication :

> " To those *confrères* across the Channel who, refraining from intrusive demonstration, with a pluck and delicacy all their own, 'sat tight' during the struggle, these decrees of the Judges are affectionately dedicated."

Below, a Butterfly bows gracefully and sends its sting to England. The tiny toad is the only realistic drawing in his books, and to make it realistic he needed a model. He thought of applying at the Zoological Gardens, was promised one by Mr. Wimbush, whose studio was in Fitzroy Street, and finally, was provided with a good specimen by his step-son, Mr. E. Godwin. He put the toad in a paper box, forgot all about it, and was shocked when he heard it was dead.

> " You know, they say I starved it. Well, it must have caught a fly or two, and I thought toads lived in stone or amber—or something—for hundreds of years—don't you know the stories ?—Perhaps it was because I hadn't the amber ! "

The Baronet and the Butterfly was published in Paris by M. Louis Henry May on May 13, 1899. Whistler objected to

the date. But on the 13th it appeared and the result justified his superstition. It did not attract the same attention as *The Gentle Art.* When we saw him in Paris that same month, he seemed to think the fault was with the critics, who were keeping up the old played-out business of "unworthy," the "old misunderstanding and misrepresentation." The truth is, however, that interest in the Eden trial had never been as great as he fancied, and the report was dull reading, principally through the absence of cross-examination which would, in England, have given Whistler the opportunity of "scalping" his victim. *The Gentle Art* was made up of Whistler's writings and reports of his answers in court; *The Baronet and the Butterfly* was made up of speeches of advocates and judges. In the marginal notes, the dedication, the argument, he was brilliant and witty, and the Butterfly was gay as ever. There was too little Whistler in it, that was its fault.

The book was one only of many schemes that occupied him during these years.

The International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers was being organised, and the *Atelier Carmen* in Paris, which he was to direct, was being planned, and they were both so important that their history is reserved for other chapters. Another venture from which he hoped great things, was his endeavour to dispense with the middleman in art. He could not reconcile himself to the large sums gained by buying and selling his work since 1892. Over the sale of old work, he had no control; the sale of new he determined to keep in his own hands. He would be his own agent, set up his own shop, form a trust in Whistlers. We think it was in 1896, he first spoke to us about it, delighted, sure that he was to succeed financially at last. In 1897, rumours were spread of a "Whistler Syndicate." In 1898, advertisements of the "Company of the Butterfly" appeared in the *Athenæum*—

the Company composed, as far as we ever knew, of James McNeill Whistler only. Two rooms were taken on the first floor at No. 2 Hinde Street, Manchester Square, close to the Wallace Gallery. They were charming, a delicate tint on the walls, the floor covered with matting, white muslin curtains at the windows. A few prints were hung. One or two small pictures stood on easels. To go to Whistler in the studio for his work was one thing; it was quite another to go to a shop run by no one knew whom, which was half the time closed, and which attracted scarcely a visitor when opened. We doubt if anything was ever sold there, we never met any one in the place. The rooms were soon turned over to Mr. Heinemann for a show of Mr. Nicholson's colour-prints, and, after that, no more was heard of the "Company of the Butterfly."

There had been another reason for its establishment, apart from the sale of his pictures. So many people came to the studio for so many reasons that, had he let them all in, he would have had no time to himself. Those whom he wanted to see, if there was any reason for seeing them, artists and students who were in sympathy, had no difficulty in getting in. Those who wanted to buy pictures should go to the "Company of the Butterfly" and buy them there without interrupting his work. But no shop could dispose of the constant visits from the merely curious, from photographers asking for his portrait, journalists asking for an interview, literary people anxious to make articles or books about him who would write to arrange for a certain hour and then appear without waiting for a reply. One, who had written to say he was coming with a letter of introduction, on his arrival found the door carefully fastened and heard Whistler gaily whistling inside, and that was all the indignant visitor heard or saw of him. There is a story of an American collector who, calling one day when not wanted, and after wasting much

PORTRAIT OF A BABY

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of Whistler's time and arriving at no conclusion, finally said :

" How much for the whole lot ? "
" Five millions."
" What ? "
" My posthumous prices ! "

There are numerous stories of Whistler's manner of meeting the hordes who tried to force themselves into the studio, or even friends who came uninvited. He would open the door just wide enough to show the great palette and sheaf of brushes in his hand and regret that he was with a sitter. Once a friend stretched out his hand, felt the brushes, and they were dry ; he was let in. Mr. Eddy gives another instance :

" An acquaintance had brought, without invitation, a friend, ' a distinguished and clever woman,' to the studio in the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs. They reached the door, both out of breath from their long climb. ' Ah ! my dear Whistler,' drawled C——, ' I have taken the liberty of bringing Lady D—— to see you. I knew you would be delighted.'—' Delighted ! I'm sure ; quite beyond expression, but '—mysteriously, and holding the door so as to bar their entrance—' my dear Lady D——, I would never forgive our friend for bringing you up six flights of stairs on so hot a day to visit a studio at one of these—eh—pagan moments when—and he glanced furtively behind him, and still further closed the door—' it is absolutely impossible for a lady to be received. Upon my soul, I should never forgive him.'—And Whistler bowed them down the six flights and returned to the portrait of a very sedate old gentleman, who had taken advantage of the interruption to break for a moment the rigor of his pose."

The " Company of the Butterfly " never relieved him of the visitors who were more eager to see him than his work. But this he did not discover until he had devoted to the venture far more time than he had to spare, during the crowded years of its existence.

CHAPTER XLIII. BETWEEN LONDON AND PARIS. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN NINETY-SEVEN TO NINETEEN HUNDRED

AFTER his marriage, Whistler was curiously unfortunate in his choice of apartments and studios. The studio in the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, on the sixth floor, was the worst possible for a man with a weak heart to climb to; the apartment in the Rue du Bac, low and damp, was as bad for a man who caught cold easily. He was constantly ill during the winter of 1897–98, which he passed in Paris. Influenza kept him in bed in November, in January, and again in March, when he was dull and listless as never before, except in Venice after the *sirocco*, he said: "I am so tired—I who am never tired!"

Whistler's heart, always weak, was beginning to trouble him. He had often been ill before, but, nervous as he was about his health, he would never realise the seriousness of his condition. We have known him, when really too ill to work, get up out of bed in order to accomplish something important. A few years before, confined with quinsy to his brother's house, forced to write what he wanted to say on a slate, when some one he did not want to see was announced, he broke into words, "Tell him to go away!" Illness suggested death, and no man ever shrank more from the thought, or mention, of death, than Whistler. There was always in life so much r him to do, and so little time in which to do it. He would tell his brother it was useless for doctors to know so

PORTRAIT OF WHISTLER

Pen and Ink Drawing, Study for Portrait, Brown and Gold

much if they had not yet discovered the elixir of life. Why not try to find it, he urged Dr. Whistler. Didn't it seem as if it must be somewhere in the heart of the unknown ? Who could tell ? It must be there.

In the studio, he now worked harder than ever. It seemed almost as if illness made him foresee that his time was short and he was goaded on by the thought of the many things still to finish. When he was in London, we were distressed by his fatigue at the end of his long day in the studio, but he told us he was like the old cart-horse that could keep going as long as it was in the traces, but dropped down the minute it was set free. When he was in Paris, his letters were full of work and of the " amazing things " going on in the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs. Often he said,

> " Really, you know, I could almost laugh at the extraordinary progress I am making, and the lovely things I am inventing—work beyond anything I have ever done before."

He was only beginning to know and to understand, he felt. All that had gone before was experimental. There were new portraits. In 1897, one was begun of Mr. George Vanderbilt —" The Modern Philip : " the large full-length, in riding dress, his whip in his hand, standing against the deep, shadowy background of the later portraits. The canvas was sent from one studio to the other, just as Whistler and Mr. Vanderbilt happened to be together either in Paris or London. Probably not one of his other portraits of men interested Whistler so much ; certainly not one was finer than the picture when we saw it in the London studio. But it was a wreck in the Paris Memorial Exhibition of 1905. Like some of the other portraits of this period, it had been worked over too often. He also, in these years, painted Mrs. Vanderbilt, the oval *Ivory and Gold* shown at the Salon of 1902. " Carmen," his Paris model, a rich, luxuriant beauty, sat to him for several pictures. Other portraits were started a year or so

later of his brother-in-law, Mr. Birnie Philip, and of Mr. Elwell, an artist and old friend. In May 1898, at the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, Whistler showed us the full-length of himself, in long overcoat, called *Gold and Brown* in the Universal Exhibition of 1900, but far from successful, and he had little pleasure in it. Before he finished it, Miss Marian Draughn, a very beautiful American girl, began to pose for him.

This was the period, too, of the series of small heads and half-lengths for which children usually sat. He loved children and instances of his kindliness to those who posed for him come from every side. Mr. Ernest G. Brown remembers Whistler's thoughtfulness and consideration when his daughter sat for *Pretty Nelly Brown*, one of the most beautiful of the series. We have the same story from Mr. Croal Thomson, of whose daughter, *Little Evelyn*, Whistler made a lithograph. When he went to the house at Highgate Evelyn would run to meet him with outstretched hands, her face lifted up to be kissed, and while he worked the other children would come and look on. Mr. Alan S. Cole has told us that once Whistler found his three little daughters decorating the drawing-room and hanging up a big " welcome " in greens and flowers for the Mother who was away and to return that afternoon. He forgot what he had come for, and helped, as eager and excited as they, and stayed, a child with the others, until Mrs. Cole arrived. He was walking from the Paris studio one day with Mrs. Clifford Addams, and they saw some children playing; he made her stop—" I must look at the babbies," he said, " you know, I love the babbies ! " Later, during his last illness, he liked to have Mrs. Addams' own little girl, Diane, in the studio with him. And there are the portraits of Mr. Brandon Thomas' baby, *Master Stephen Manuel*, and others, that show his pleasure in painting his small sitters. The children of the street

LILLIE IN OUR ALLEY
(*Brown and Gold*)

adored him, that is, the children of Chelsea and Fitzroy Street who were used to artists and knew him well. There was one he was for ever telling us about, a child of five or six, whose precocity frightened while it fascinated him. "I likes whusky," she confided to him one day, "and I likes Scoatch best!" She described her Christmas at home: "Father, 'e wus drunk, Mother wus drunk, Sister wus drunk, I wus drunk—and we made the cat drunk too!" A still younger child gave him sittings, a baby of not more than three, the little model for many of the pastels. She and the mother were resting one afternoon, Whistler watching her every movement. "Really," he said, "you are a beautiful little thing!" She looked up at him, "Yes, I is, Whistler," she lisped. There were exceptions, and his popularity with children did not help him one Sunday afternoon, the only time it is possible to sketch with comfort in the City, when he went with J. to make a study of Clerkenwell Church tower which was about to be restored. They drove to the church, but the light was bad and the colour not right, so they wandered off to Cloth Fair, already known to Whistler and, until a few months ago, the most perfect, really the only, bit of old London. Though Whistler had worked there many times before, on this afternoon the children did not approve of him. After a short encounter in which they, as always, got the better, Whistler and J. retired to another cab followed by any refuse that came handy. But the children he painted, *The Little Rose of Lyme Regis* no less than *The Little Sophie of Soho* and *Lillie in our Alley*, the small Italian waifs and strays, were his friends, and no painter ever gave the grace and feeling of childhood more sympathetically than he in their portraits.

He was also absorbed in a series of nudes. Few of his paintings toward the end satisfied him so entirely as the small *Phryne the Superb, Builder of Temples* which he sent

first to the International in 1901 and next to the Salon in 1902. The first time he showed it to us he asked :

> " Would she be more superb—more truly the Builder of Temples —had I painted her what is called life-size by the foolish critics who always bring out their foot-rule ? Is it a question of feet and inches when you look at her ? "

He intended afterwards to paint an Eve, an Odalisque, a Bathsheba, and a Danæ, all on a very large scale. He at one time arranged that his sketches for the designs should be set up on the canvas by his apprentices, Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Addams, but this was another of his unrealised plans. Suggestions for the paintings were in the little pastels of undraped or slightly draped figures, for which he found the perfect model in London. Even when not in the studio, he kept sketching her from memory and he was in despair when she married and went to some remote colony. These pastels are numerous and rank with his perfect work. They are drawings on brown paper of girls dancing, posing with fans, bending over bowls, drinking tea, usually filmy draperies floating about them ; in some a young mother holds a child in her arms or on her knees. Nothing could apparently be slighter than the means by which the effect is produced ; the modelling given with a few lines, the colour just a suggestion. But they have the exquisiteness of little Tanagra figures and are as complete.

All this work was done with an almost feverish concern about mediums and materials and methods. He usually sat now as he worked, and he wore spectacles, sometimes two pairs, one over the other. He was never more careful with the quality and mixing of his colours, the size and texture and preparation of his canvas. At last, the knowledge was coming to him, he said again and again. And he was never more successful in obtaining the unity and harmony he had always sought, in hiding the labour by which it was

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A CUP OF TEA
(Pastel)

obtained, and in giving to his painting the beauty of surface prized so highly. On the smaller canvas, there was less difficulty in his method of painting the picture as a whole, and not building it up out of successively painted parts. Often the old charge of slightness and "no drawing" was brought against the later pictures simply because in them he achieved the perfection he required of himself, and they looked "so easy;" because his canvases, as a rule, were uniform in size, and his subjects bore a certain superficial resemblance to each other, the objection, which always angered him, was made that he could no longer originate new schemes, and he was reproached with monotony. Though other portraits are more elaborate, not one is more powerful and strong, more masterly as a study of character, and therefore more individual than *The Master Smith of Lyme Regis*. When it is contrasted with *The Little Rose*, the embodiment of simple, sweet, healthy childhood, and *The Little Lady Sophie of Soho* and *Lillie in our Alley*, the sickly atmosphere of the slums reflected in their strange beauty, and these again with the exuberant colour and life of *Carmen*, there can be no question of the variety in Whistler's later work, though, at the very end, a certain manner that might have grown into mannerism became more marked. There was a similarity in the general design. Most of the pictures were heads and half-lengths of children and, except in the finest, noses, eyes and mouth were alike in character, and hands were badly drawn and clumsily put in. The colour was mostly beautiful and he exulted in it, but, during the last year or so, he must have known as well as anybody that his power of work was leaving him.

Whistler spent the summer of 1898 chiefly in London, going first to Mr. Heinemann's at Whitehall Court, then to Garlant's. The delightful evenings of the year before began again for us, and there was a fresh interest for him in the war

between the United States and Spain. It was " a wonderful and beautiful war," he thought, the Spaniards were gentlemen, and his pockets were filled with newspaper clippings to prove it all. If we pointed out a blunder on the part of our soldiers, if we gave chance a share in our victories, he was furious :

> " Why say if any but Spaniards had been at the top of San Juan, we never would have got there ?—Why question the *if* ?—The facts are all that count. No fight could be more beautifully managed. I am telling you !—I, a West Point man, know."

He was going out more by this time and seeing more people. But his pleasure in general society was less than before his wife's death and evidently he preferred the quiet and want of restraint of the evenings with us. Then, too, chance encounters in our flat were often the source of entertainment. One we recall most vividly was with Frederick Sandys whom he had not met for almost thirty years. Sandys was with us in the late afternoon when Whistler knocked his usual exaggerated postman's knock that could not be mistaken, followed by the unfailing peal at the bell. Sandys seemed agitated, but there was no escape. They gave each other a chilly recognition and sat down and glared, Whistler looking precisely like Boldini's portrait. But presently they began to talk, and they talked till the early hours of the morning as if they were back at Tudor House ; Sandys, as then, in the white waistcoat with gold buttons, but bent with age, Whistler as straight and erect, but now wrinkled and grey.

He returned to Paris late in the autumn, settling there for the winter. Except for his attacks of illness, there was but one interruption to his work. Mr. Heinemann was married at Porto D'Anzio in February 1899, and Whistler went to Italy to act as best man at the wedding. He made on this journey his first and only visit to Rome. He was disappointed. To us he described the city as " a bit of an old ruin alongside of a railway station where I saw—Mrs. Potter Palmer." Of

THE LITTLE LADY SOPHIE OF SOHO

Rose and Gold

the many other things he admitted afterwards that he had seen, nothing interested him but St. Peter's:

"Rome was awful—a hard sky all the time, a glaring sun and a strong wind. After I left the railway station, there were big buildings more like Whiteley's than anything I expected in the Eternal City. St. Peter's was fine, with its great yellow walls, the interior too big perhaps, but you had only to go inside to know where Wren got his ideas—how he, well, you know, robbed Peter's to build Paul's! And I like the Vatican, the Swiss Guards, great big fellows, lolling about, as in Dumas; they made you think of D'Artagnan, Aramis and the others. And Michael Angelo? a tremendous fellow, yes; the frescoes in the Sistine Chapel?—interesting as pictures, but with all the legs and arms of the figures sprawling everywhere, I could not see the decoration. There can be no decoration without repose: a tremendous fellow, but not so much in the David and other things I was shown in Rome and Florence, as in that one unfinished picture at the National Gallery. There is often elegance in the *loggie* of Raphael, but the big frescoes of the *stanze* did not interest me."

Velasquez's portrait of *Innocent* in the Doria Palace, he, unfortunately, did not see.

During the journey to Porto D'Anzio, Princess ——, one of the wedding guests, who heard vaguely that Whistler was an artist, inquired of him:

"*Monsieur fait de la peinture, n'est ce pas?*"
"*Oui, Princesse.*"
"*On me l'avait dit. Moi aussi, j'en fait, Monsieur.*"
"*Charmant, Princesse, nous sommes des collègues.*"

On the way back from Rome, Whistler stopped at Florence. Of his stay there, Mr. J. Kerr-Lawson wrote to us:

"McNeill has been here and just gone—we had him lightly on our hands all day yesterday.

"We didn't 'do' Florence for there was a fierce glaring sun and a horrible *Tramontane* raging—so we spent the best of the morning trying to write a letter in the Roccoco manner to the Syndic of Murano quite unsuccessfully. [This was after the awards in the

Venice International Exhibition.] The effort seems to have been suggested by the festive oratory at Porto D'Anzio. The Pope and the King both sent delegates. The purple and scarlet speeches of the *Monsignori* and the Cardinal seem to have inspired the Master to emulate their achievements in rhetoric. However, we found that English prose could not bear the strain of perpetual superlatives, and so our designs upon the poor little Syndic came to nothing.

"After luncheon I took him down to the Uffizi, where we had a good deal of fun in the Portrait Gallery. We seemed to be the only people rash enough to brave the awful wind, for we saw no one in the Gallery but a frozen *Guardia*. He—poor fellow—was brushed aside by a magnificent and truly awe-inspiring gesture as we approached that battered and begrimed portrait in which Velasquez still looks out upon the world which he has mastered with an expression of superbly arrogant scorn.

"It was a dramatic moment—the flat-brimmed *chapeau de haut forme* came off with a grand sweep and was deposited on a stool with the long stick, and then the Master, standing back about six feet from the picture and drawing himself up to much more than his own full natural height, with his left hand upon his breast and the right thrust out magisterially, exclaimed '*Quelle allure!*' Then you should have seen him. After the solemn act of Homage, when he had resumed his hat and pole, we relaxed considerably over the lesser immortals of this crazy and incongruous Valhalla—what an ill-assorted company! How did they all get together? Liotard, the Swiss, jostles Michael Angelo, Guiseppi MacPherson rubs shoulders with Titian, Herkomer hangs beside Ingres, and Poynter is a pendant to Sir Joshua. There are the greatest and the least, the noblest and the meanest brought together by the capricious folly of succeeding directors and harmonised by that touch of vanity that makes the whole world akin.

"One wonders whom they will ask next. Certainly not Whistler. They knew quite well he was here, but not the slightest notice was taken of him. *En revanche*, every now and then some vulgar mediocrity passes this way and then the foolish Florentines are lavish with their laurels."

After some of these absences from Paris and his studio, Whistler discovered that pictures and prints were disappearing.

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THE VIOLINIST

It worried him, and various means were taken to stop the theft and to recover the missing articles. We have little doubt that, at times, Whistler lost prints through his own carelessness. We know that once, certainly, his method of drying his etchings between sheets of blotting-paper thrown on the floor was disastrous. One morning an artist came to see us bringing a number of beautiful proofs of the *Venice Set*, still in sheets of blotting paper as he had bought them from an old rag and paper man in Red Lion Passage, who thought they could be no good because the margins were cut down and who sold them for a shilling apiece. The artist frankly admitted that he did not care for them, and we offered him half a crown. "O," he said, "as you are willing to give that, now I shall find out what they are really worth." He got sixty pounds for them, but several of the prints separately have since sold for very much more. Accidents like this would account for some of the things that Whistler thought were stolen, but not for all. A few works that had disappeared were actually recovered during his lifetime. Shortly after his death, many were sold at the Hotel Drouot, and more recently others of the missing works have come into the hands of dealers. Only those near him at the time can realise how much this troubled and annoyed him during his last years. At the same time, too, he began to suffer from another of the evils of success. Pictures somewhat resembling his, and attributed to him, began to appear, especially at auctions, and others were sent to him for identification or signature, by persons who had purchased them. If he knew beforehand that one of these shams was coming up in the auction room, he would send a representative to try and stop the sale, or, if submitted to him, he would object to give it up again. Neither expedient met with marked success. Even at present there is at least one person who is deliberately making Whistlers, especially water-colours.

Whistler could not stay long from London, and the early summer of 1899 saw him back once more, living at Garlant's and making his usual visits to Mr. Heinemann, now at Weybridge. He was in town for the sequel to the Eden affair. He heard that, on July 15, there was to be a sale of Sir William Eden's pictures at Christie's. He went to it, and came to us afterwards.

"Really, it has been beautiful—I know you will enjoy it—It occurred to me in the morning—the Baronet's sale to-day—h'm—the Butterfly should see how things are going! And I went home, and I changed my morning dress, my dandy straw hat—and then—very correct and elegant, I sauntered down King Street into Christie's. At the top of the stairway, some one spoke to me.—'Well, you know, my dear friend,' I said, 'I do not know who you are, but you shall have the honour of taking me in!' And, on his arm, I walked into the big room. The auctioneer was crying, 'Going! Going! Thirty shillings! Going!' 'Ha! ha!' I laughed—not loudly, not boisterously—it was very delicately, very neatly done. But the room was electrified. Some of the henchmen were there; they grew rigid, afraid to move, afraid to glance my way out of the corners of their eyes. 'Twenty shillings, Going!' the auctioneer would cry. 'Ha! ha!' I would laugh and things went for nothing, and the henchmen trembled. Louis Fagan came across the room to speak to me—Fagan, representing the British Museum, as it were, was quite the most distinguished man there. And now, having seen how things were, I took Fagan's arm—'You,' I said, 'may have the honour of taking me out.'"

He dined with us the next evening and found Mr. Harry Wilson, whose brother-in-law, Mr. Sydney Morse, had been the very friend upon whose arm Whistler had entered the auction room. Mr. Wilson was already full of the story, and confirmed the "electric shock" to the atmosphere when Whistler appeared at the sale.

He ran over to Holland once during the summer. Part of the time he was at Pourville, near Dieppe, where he had taken a house for Miss Birnie Philip and her mother. He

was constantly going backward and forward to London and Paris. The sea was on the right side at Dieppe, at Madame Lefèvre's restaurant he could get as good a breakfast as in Paris, and many small oils and water-colours were done before the bad weather drove him away.

In Paris, during the winter of 1899-1900, he took two little rooms for himself at the Hotel Chatham, where the last three years he had often stayed. He was afraid to risk the dampness of the Rue du Bac. He had fewer friends in Paris than in London, and he was often lonely. He would go to see M. Drouet, and say to him, "*Tu sais, je suis ennuyé.*" And M. Drouet, to amuse him, would get up little dinners, at which all who were left of the students of forty years before met again. One dinner, not long before his death, was given in honour of Becquet, whom he had etched. A wreath of laurel was prepared. During dinner M. Drouet said he had met many great men, but, *pour la morale,* none greater than Becquet, who was moved to tears. Then Whistler said they had wanted to present him with some little souvenir, and the laurel wreath was brought and offered to him by Whistler and Becquet fairly broke down; he "would hang it on the walls of his studio, always to have it before him," he said.

Once, M. Drouet took Whistler to the fair at Neuilly, made him ride in a merry-go-round. Whistler lost his hat, dropped his eyeglass. "What would London journalists say if they could see me now?" he asked. They generally dined at Beaugé's, a little restaurant in the Passage des Panoramas, where M. Drouet and a group of artists, literary men and barristers, met in the evening. Whistler renewed the old intimacy with M. Oulevey, whom he had barely seen since the early Paris days. Madame Oulevey's memories are, above all, of Whistler's dining with them in the Passage des Favorites at the other end of the Rue Vaugirard, when he wore his customary pumps so that, a storm coming up and

not a cab to be found in their remote quarter, they had to keep him for hours. His pumps left an impression on M. Drouet, too, who was sure it was because Whistler wore them by day and could not walk in them, that he was so often seen driving through the streets in a cab. And he seemed so tired then, M. Drouet said, half the time lying back, fast asleep.

In February, the sad news came to him of the death of his brother, Dr. Whistler. The two brothers had been devoted to one another since boyhood, and Whistler felt the loss acutely. It made him the more ready to rejoin his friends in London, and two months later found him staying with Mr. Heinemann, who had moved from Whitehall Court to Norfolk Street.

There E. dined to meet him the evening after his arrival. Mr. Arthur Symons gives, in his *Studies in Seven Arts*, his impression of the dinner, and of Whistler :

> " I never saw any one so feverishly alive as this little, old man, with his bright, withered cheeks, over which the skin was drawn tightly, his darting eyes, under their prickly bushes of eyebrow, his fantastically creased black and white curls of hair, his bitter and subtle mouth, and, above all, his exquisite hands, never at rest."

To us, who knew Whistler, the idea of his age was never present. He always seemed the youngest in whatever company he was. But to those who saw him for the first time the fact was evident that he was growing old. He had, moreover, been before the public for so long that people got an exaggerated idea of his age. Mr. Symons continues, in his recollections of that evening :

> " Some person officially connected with art was there, an urbane sentimentalist ; and after every official platitude there was a sharp crackle from Whistler's corner, and it was as if a rattlesnake had leapt suddenly out."

THE SEA, POURVILLE

ROBIN HOOD BAY

When the " urbane sentimentalist " remarked that

" There never was such a thing as an art-loving people, an artistic period,"

Whistler said :

" Dear me ! it's very flattering to find that I have made you see at last. But really, you know, I shall have to copyright my little things after this ! "

When some one objected to the good manners of the French because they were all on the surface, Whistler thought,

" Well, you know, a very good place to have them."

CHAPTER XLIV. THE INTERNATIONAL. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN NINETY-SEVEN TO NINETEEN HUNDRED AND THREE

THE Exhibition of International Art, the original name of the International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Gravers, was Whistler's idea. He had always hoped for a gallery where he could show his work in his own way, with the work of men in sympathy with him. Often and often, he talked to us of this. It mattered little to him where the gallery should be—in New York or London, Paris or Berlin; the exhibition should not be local or national, but an Art Congress for the artists of the world. This was his aim from the beginning. The men whom he wished to have associated with himself lived mostly in London, where now the greater part of his time was spent, and London seemed the place for the first exhibition. He and Mr. E. A. Walton together tried to get a lease of the Grosvenor Gallery, and, when they failed in this, he turned to the Grafton. Here also there were difficulties, and nothing definite was done until 1897, when a young journalist, who was also a painter, Mr. Francis Howard, conceived the idea of promoting a company to hold an exhibition at Prince's Skating Club, Knightsbridge. As the artists were to incur no financial responsibilities and have complete artistic control, Whistler consented to co-operate. The first meeting was on December 23, 1897, and there were present John Lavery, E. A. Walton, G. Sauter, and Francis Howard. Whistler, who had been consulted, at first agreed that members of the Royal Academy and other artistic

bodies, should be admitted, and at the second meeting, February 7, 1898, Mr. Alfred Gilbert, R.A., took the chair. A circular, unsigned and undated, was then issued, and on it appeared the names of James McNeill Whistler, Alfred Gilbert, Frederick Sandys, John Lavery, James Guthrie, Arthur Melville, Charles W. Furse, Charles Ricketts, C. Hazlewood Shannon, E. A. Walton, Joseph Farquharson, Maurice Greiffenhagen, Will Rothenstein, G. Sauter, Francis Howard. It stated, with a clumsiness Whistler could hardly have passed had he seen the circular beforehand, that the object of the Society was the much-needed "organisation in London of Exhibitions of the finest Art of the time . . . the non-recognition of nationality in Art, and the hanging and placing of works *irrespective of such consideration* . . . The Exhibitions, filling as they will an unoccupied place in the cosmopolitan ground of International Art, will not be in opposition to existing institutions."

An Executive Council appointed itself, and, on February 16, 1898, Whistler was unanimously elected Chairman. The most distinguished artists of every nationality were invited to join an Honorary Council. The Executive, to which J., on Whistler's nomination, was elected in March, had entire charge of the affairs of the Society. There were to be no ordinary members, but only "honorary" members by invitation.

Personal jealousies, and personal preferences immediately crept in, as they always will. Mr. Gilbert resigned, which was much to be regretted, and several other English members withdrew from the Council which speedily became as international as the name of the Society into which it formed itself two months later (April 23), when officers were elected, and, Whistler proposed by Mr. Lavery, and seconded by Mr. J. J. Shannon, was made President, with Mr. Lavery as Vice-President, and Mr. Francis Howard as Honorary Secretary.

The International was the second society of artists over which Whistler presided. Only ten years had passed since his resignation from the British Artists', but the change in his position before the world was great. The British Artists, an old and decrepit body, had chosen him as President, in the hope that his own notoriety and his following of young men would bring them the advertisement they needed ; the International, a new and vigorous organisation, elected him because they knew that no other artist could give them such distinction. In the 'eighties, Whistler was still mistrusted; in the 'nineties, he was universally acknowledged as one of the few great artists of the nineteenth century. The change in his own position was not greater than that which his influence had made in contemporary art. This influence had been pointed out by the few for some years past. But the last decade had strengthened it until it could be denied by none. The younger generation had been accepted in the meanwhile, and the two groups of most prominence and promise were the first to admit their debt to Whistler and to proclaim it openly in their work. The young men of the New English Art Club had seen in subject and sentiment a temptation of the devil and devoted themselves to the discovery of the "painter's poetry" in the life about them, and the beauty of colour and form wherever it might lurk, whether in the London 'bus transformed by the magic of the London atmosphere, or in the *Lion-Comique*, transfigured in the light of the Music Hall stage. The young men of the Glasgow School had been pre-occupied with decorative design, with "pattern," with colour schemes, endeavouring to make an "arrangement" of their every portrait, and in their every landscape to produce a "harmony." No doubt, study and imitation of Whistler were, in some cases, pushed to folly. But all that was healthiest and best in the art of the country was coming from these two groups, many of

THE WIDOW

whom had established an international reputation for themselves by the time the new Society was founded. Even in the Academy, anecdote lost for an interval its old pre-eminence, and it looked as if Academicians began to understand that the painter's only object was not to tell a story. A new generation of critics had grown up whose belief in Whistler was no less than that of the new generation of artists, and Whistler's words and definitions became the *clichés* of the criticism of the day.

Nor was his influence confined to England. From the early 'eighties, when the jury had become more representative at the old Salon,the pictures he sent to it had been honoured. From the early 'nineties, the new Salon seemed bent on emphasising with fresh proofs its acceptance of him as master. Other recent influences in France had waxed and waned. The realism of Bastien-Lepage, which sank into photography with painters of less accomplishment, and the square brush-mark were already *vieux jeu*. Impressionism had swamped itself in chemical problems and the technique of the Impressionists had been degraded to the exaggerations and absurdities of the Pointillistes. Whistler brought with him technical sanity, a feeling for beauty, and reverence for fine tradition, and he, who had been mistaken for the most eccentric of all *poseurs* in paint, gradually led the way back to dignity and reticence in art. The effect of his example was revealed in the work not only of French, but of American and other artists of almost every nationality, either by their frank imitation or else by their attitude towards Nature and the reserve of their technique. Because of the universal recognition now accorded him, no one anywhere was better qualified for the Presidency of an International Society of artists.

The new post was of much more importance than the Presidency of the British Artists, as Whistler realised. The honour came, it is true, from no official body. Officially, to

the last, he was destined to go without the recognition due to him. In France he was but an ordinary *Sociétaire* of the *Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts* The National Academy of Design in America was as indifferent to him as the Royal Academy in England. His membership in the Academies of Dresden, Munich, Rome and Scotland was a mere compliment —a compliment he could and always did appreciate—but it carried no intimate relations and no responsibilities with it, and required of him no active work. The new Society, if not official, consisted in its Executive of most of the strongest "outsiders" in England, and had the support of the most distinguished men of his profession throughout the world. Their choice of him was not more an acknowledgment of his supremacy as artist than an expression of confidence in him as leader, and he took no less pleasure in their tribute than trouble not to disappoint their expectations. His interest was practical until the last. His experience with the British Artists was a help in constituting the Society. The sole authority rested with the Executive Council the members of which elected themselves and could not be got rid of except by their voluntary resignation or expulsion. Theoretically, the idea was magnificent, if the narrowest and most autocratic conceivable. "Napoleon and I do these things," we have heard Whistler say, and the disaster at Suffolk Street had taught him that an intelligent autocrat is the best leader possible. His policy, however, if autocratic, was broad. In most societies, painting held a monopoly, but, in his, sculpture was to be relegated to no second place and black-and-white, or "Graving" he called it, was to be treated as the equal of both as it never had been before. All his rules and regulations were as sane and practical, and if weakness creeps, or has crept, into the Society, it must come from disregard of them.

The first exhibition was opened in May 1898. The Skating

THE LITTLE BLUE BONNET

Blue and Coral

Rink at Knightsbridge was divided into three large and two small galleries. Whistler's scheme of decoration, for in this particular he carried on the methods adopted in his own shows and at Suffolk Street, was one hitherto never attempted in a large English exhibition, and the hanging was more perfect than any seen up to that time even on the Continent. The President's velarium, now without question of patent, was used, and he designed the seal for the Society. The artistic success of the show could not be questioned. No such collection of modern art had ever before been made in London, and it was a proof that Whistler, in reality, was as liberal in matters of art as he was narrow and prejudiced in the popular conception of him. In one of the many often-repeated stories about him, when he was told that he and Velasquez were the only two painters in the world, he is reported to have said, "Why drag in Velasquez?" At the International he "dragged in" all the artists all over the world who were doing the best, or the most individual work. Von Uhde, Manet, Degas, Cecilia Beaux, Segantini, Blanche, Lavery, Thaulow, Zorn, Thoma, Liebermann, Walton, Guthrie, Nicholson, Muhrman, Monet, Khnopff, Sauter, Van Toroop, Aman-Jean, Fantin-Latour, Stuck, Renoir, Puvis de Chavannes, Alexander, Fragiacomo, McClure, Hamilton, Maris, were a few of the painters. Whistler exerted himself to arrange a group of his own work worthy of the President, sending several earlier pictures, *At the Piano*, *La Princesse du Pays de la Porcelaine*, *Rosa Corder*, among them, and two or three of the latest, *The Philosopher*, *The Little Blue Bonnet*, his own portrait. The sculpture was as interesting as the painting, Rodin, St. Gaudens, MacMonnies and Meunier exhibiting. And drawings and engravings were for the first time properly presented, as they deserved to be, Whistler, Renouard, Vuillard, Vallotton, C. H. Shannon, Klinger, Forain, Lautrec, Pennell, Lunois, Koepping, Boldini,

Besnard, Carrière, Bauer, Lepère, Pissarro, Vierge, Steinlen, all contributing, and space being made for a large number of drawings by Beardsley, who had died but recently. Before the show was over, delegates were sent, and communications received, from Paris and Venice, asking for an exchange of exhibitions.

Whistler came from Paris for the opening, a quiet affair, as the endeavour to obtain the presence of the Prince of Wales was unsuccessful, and lunched with the Council on the opening day, and attended one or two Sunday afternoon receptions. If he did not inaugurate it, he thoroughly agreed with the scheme of a fine illustrated catalogue, which was published by Mr. Heinemann, with *The Little Blue Bonnet,* in photogravure, as frontispiece.

Whistler soon realised that it was utterly impossible for a man to serve actively in two rival societies ; he had said as much when he was trying to instil new life into the British Artists ; and he now determined that members of the Council of the International who were members of other societies must leave the Society, or, if not, he would. His decision was precipitated by a new election to the Council. He was in Paris at the time, and the fact that two members of the Council left London at almost an hour's notice for the Rue du Bac to arrange matters with him, shows how completely and actively he identified himself with the affairs of the Society. The whole episode is typical. They arrived early in the morning. He was not up, but sent word that they must breakfast with him in the studio. During breakfast he talked of everything but the Society ; after breakfast he made them listen to a Fourth of July spread-eagle oration squeaked out of a primitive gramophone somebody had presented him with, to his enduring amusement ; and not until the last twenty minutes before they had to start on their return, would he refer to the deadlock in the Council. Then he had all his

plans ready and stated just what he proposed to do, just what he wanted done, just what must be done—just, we might add, what was done. And not merely at every crisis, but in every detail, it was the same. Once, some years before, in speaking of another independent society, he said, "Ah, the New English Art Club—it's only a raft!" But the International he called "a fighting ship," of which he, as Captain, had taken command. He was not President in name alone. He directed the management of the Society, no measure could be taken until it had been submitted to him and approved by him. He expected the deference the position entitled him to; in return, he gave the practical aid not always to be had from a President. And so it always was. Even during his last illness, nothing was done without his knowledge and sanction.

The second International Exhibition, or "Art Congress," was held also at Knightsbridge from May to July 1899. The President came over, when the hanging was finished. It was arranged this year that a special show of his etchings should be made, and a small room, decorated for the purpose, was called the White Room. As Whistler was in Paris, J. and Mrs. Whibley were deputed to go to the studio and select the prints. J. chose a number that had not been seen before, principally from the *Naval Review Series*. Whistler, for some reason, resented the selection when first he saw the prints on the walls in the special room reserved for them. The Committee were in consternation and sent for J. Whistler said to him,

> "Now look what you have done!"
> "But what have I done? Have I done you any harm?"

And that was the end of it. His objection may have been because he feared, as we remember his saying of these prints another time, that they were "beyond the understanding of the abomination outside." But his fury lasted only for the

moment, and he and J. and Lavery passed a good part of that night at work in the gallery on the catalogue.

Whistler received on the opening day, and in the evening the first of the Round Table Council dinners was held at the Café Royal, Sir James Guthrie presiding. In an admirable speech he expressed not only the delight of the Council at being able to enlist the sympathy and aid of Whistler, but their love and appreciation for the man and his work. The sympathy and co-operation then existing between the President and most of the Council was genuine, and he appreciated it quite as much as they did. After dinner, a few of the Council went on with him to Mr. Lavery's, where he was staying, and there he read the *Baronet and the Butterfly*, which had just appeared in Paris. This, because of absence or ill-health, was the only Council dinner he went to, though several have been since held, at which M. Rodin has presided.

Chase, Ménard, Baertson, Gandara, Kroyer, Melchers, Cottet, Klint, Mancini, Simon, were among the painters hitherto not known in England, who were seen at the second show, while Mrs. Clifford Addams (Miss Bate), "*massière* of the *Académie Carmen, Elève de Whistler*," showed for the first time *Etude de la Semaine*. The President exhibited several of the small canvases he had recently finished. There was sculpture by Dubois, Dillens and Rodin, and drawings by Alfred Stevens, Menzel, Rops, Legros, Timothy Cole, Milcendeau, Sullivan, Kroyer, Grasset, H. Wilson. Three illustrated catalogues of this exhibition were published by Messrs. W. H. Ward and Company. Whistler's *Chelsea Rags* and *Trouville* were both included in the ordinary editions, and the *Little Lady Sophie of Soho* and *Lillie in our Alley* were added to the *édition de luxe*. The exhibition was even less of a success financially than the first and the Society of artists came near being involved in the crash which overtook the financing company. To avoid any complications, Whistler

LA PRINCESSE DU PAYS DE LA PORCELAINE

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insisted that he should have an Honorary Solicitor and Treasurer, and Mr. William Webb was appointed.

In both exhibitions attempts to attract the public with music and receptions and entertainments were made, but Whistler strongly objected to music, saying that the two arts should be kept quite separate, as people who came to hear the music could not see the pictures, and people who came to see the pictures would not want to hear the music. There were also serious misunderstandings with the proprietor and the promoters, the former wishing to see some of his friends represented, and the latter to see some of their money back, and the outlook was rather gloomy.

No show was held in 1900, the Paris Universal Exhibition taking up most of the members' energy, and it was not until the autumn of 1901 that the third exhibition was opened at the Galleries of the Royal Institute in Piccadilly. There had been official and other changes. Mr. Sauter had been made Honorary Secretary *pro tem.*, and the Society which up till now had consisted of the Council only, admitted Associates, and with their election the International character began to wane, for, out of thirty-two Associates elected, twenty-eight were resident in Great Britain. The third show resulted in no financial loss, and several new men were hung—Morrice, Anglada, Israels, Harpignies, Wittsen, Claus, Le Sidaner, Van Bartels, Buysse. The President sent seven small paintings and pastels. Of these *Phryne the Superb* was reproduced in the catalogue, as well as *Gold and Orange—The Neighbours*, and *Green and Silver—The Great Sea*. Mr. Addams, Whistler's second apprentice, exhibited with his wife.

Mr. Sauter devoted himself to furthering the International idea of the President, and, under his Secretaryship, the International Society held exhibitions of its English members' work in Budapest, Munich, and Düsseldorf, and afterwards in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Chicago, and St. Louis. On

June 11, 1903, Mr. Sauter was relieved temporarily of the Secretaryship, and J. took his place. Within a few weeks he had the painful duty to call a meeting to announce to the Society the loss they had sustained by the death of their President.

Nevertheless, the Council determined to follow the traditions of Whistler, and to honour his memory as well as they could. Not only were the American exhibitions carried out, but the Society organised a show of British Art in Düsseldorf, and at once made arrangements for a Memorial Exhibition of the President's works in London. In the autumn of 1903, M. Rodin accepted the Presidency of the Society, and the fourth exhibition, the first held in the New Gallery, was opened in January 1904, in which the late President was represented by the *Symphony in White, No. 111*, lent by Mr. Edmund Davis; *Rose and Gold—The Tulip*, lent by Miss Birnie Philip; *Valparaiso*, lent by Mr. Graham Robertson; *Symphony in Grey—Battersea*, lent by Mrs. Armitage; and *Study for a Fan*, lent by Mr. C. H. Shannon.

This exhibition was followed in 1905 by the most important and successful show in the career of the International Society of Sculptors, Painters, and Gravers—the Memorial Exhibition of the works of James McNeill Whistler. For complete success it lacked only the co-operation of Whistler's executrix, which the Council originally understood was promised but which was ultimately withheld. There can be no doubt, however, that it was by far the most important and representative exhibition of his works ever given, superior from every point of view to the small exhibition at the Scottish Academy, in many respects to the Boston show, and also to the Paris Memorial Exhibition which was altogether disappointing. The Exhibition at the New Gallery contained, as can be seen from its elaborate catalogue, more especially the beautifully illustrated *édition de luxe* published by Mr.

Heinemann, nearly all the principal oil-paintings, the most complete collection of etchings ever got together, the complete series of lithographs and innumerable pastels, water-colours and drawings.

CHAPTER XLV. THE ACADÉMIE CARMEN. THE YEARS EIGHTEEN NINETY-EIGHT TO NINETEEN HUNDRED AND ONE

IN the autumn of 1898, a circular appeared in Paris, which created a sensation in the studios. Copies came to London and were received in New York. Whistler was going to open a school, the *Académie Whistler*. The announcement was made by his model, *Madame* Carmen Rossi. We have never seen the circular, but Whistler at once wrote from Whitehall Court, where he was staying (October 1, 1898), to the papers in Paris and London,

> "to correct an erroneous statement, or rather to modify an exaggeration, that an otherwise *bona fide* prospectus is circulating in Paris. An *atelier* is to be opened in the Passage Stanislas, and, in company with my friend, the distinguished sculptor, Mr. MacMonnies, I have promised to attend its classes. The *patronne* has issued a document in which this new Arcadia is described as the *Académie Whistler* and further qualified as the Anglo-American School. I would like it to be understood that, having hitherto abstained from all plot of instruction, this is no sudden assertion in the *Ville Lumière* of my own. Nor could I be in any way responsible for the proposed mysterious irruption in Paris of whatever Anglo-American portends. 'American,' I take it, is synonymous with modesty, and 'Anglo,' in art, I am unable to grasp at all, otherwise than as suggestive of complete innocence and the blank of Burlington House. I purpose only, then, to visit, as harmlessly as may be, in turn with Mr. MacMonnies, the new academy, which has my best wishes, and, if no other good come of it, at least to rigorously carry out my promise of never appearing anywhere else."

Whistler said also that he had nothing to do with the financial management of the school, everything with the system of teaching, and that he proposed to offer the students his knowledge of a lifetime.

The Passage Stanislas is a small street, running off the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, in which some very well-known artists have, or have had, their studios. No. 6 was a house with two storeys, and a courtyard or garden at the back, which was afterwards covered with glass. Over the front door, we are told, the sign *Académie Whistler* did appear, but only for a short time. The glazed courtyard became a studio, and there was another above, to which a fine old staircase led. The house had been built, or adapted, as a studio, and, except that the walls were distempered, no change was made. The rooms were fitted up with school furniture: easels, stools and chairs. For this, we believe, Whistler advanced the money. But there was little risk. Within a few days, a vast number of pupils had put their names down, and expressed their intention of deserting the *ateliers* of Paris, some left the Slade and other English schools, and still others came from Germany and America. Whistler was delighted, and he told us he had heard that other *ateliers* were emptying, students coming in squads from everywhere, that the Passage was crowded, and that owners of carriages struggled with *rapins* and prize-winners to get in.

Miss Inez Bate (Mrs. Clifford Addams), who was among the earliest to put down her name though she was not in Paris at the moment, who remained in the school throughout its whole existence, and who became Whistler's apprentice, has not only told us the story of the *Académie Carmen*, but has given to us, to use in this book, her record of it and of Whistler's methods of teaching, written at his request and partially corrected by him. It is really the record of his "knowledge of a lifetime" for he taught in the school the truths he had

been years in developing and formulating for himself. Miss Bate says that Whistler being in London, did not attend the first week, to the great disappointment of the pupils. But he came over in the second or third. At the school, as always, he insisted on seriousness in work. It was not to be like other schools; instead of singing, there was to be no talking; smoking was not to be allowed; the walls were not to be decorated with charcoal; the usual "studio cackle" was forbidden; if people wanted these things, they could go back from whence they had come. He was to be received as a master visiting his pupils, not as the good fellow in his shirt-sleeves. Certainly, for the first weeks, things did not go very well. "Carmen" was not used to her post, the students were not used to such a master, and Whistler was not used to them. A *massier* was appointed, and the men and women, who had been working together, were separated, and two classes were formed. Within a very short time, Miss Bate was chosen *massière*, a position she held until the school closed. She writes in her record:

"The *ateliers*, under the direction of *Madame* Carmen Rossi, were thrown open and the *Académie* began its somewhat disturbed career in the fall of 1898. Students hastened from all parts, hearing the confirmation of Mr. Whistler's rumoured intention to teach—a letter was received from him announcing that he would shortly appear—and, on the day appointed, the *Académie Carmen* had the honour of receiving him for the first time. He proceeded to look at the various studies, most carefully noting under whose teaching and in what school each student's former studies had been pursued.

"Most kindly something was said to each, and to one student who offered apology for his drawing, Mr. Whistler said simply, 'It is unnecessary—I really come to learn—feeling you are all much cleverer than I.'

"Mr. Whistler, before he left, expressed to the *Patronne* his wish that there should be separate *ateliers* for the Ladies and Gentlemen, and that the present habit of both working together should be immediately discontinued.

"His second visit took place on the following Friday, and was spent in consideration of the more advanced students. One, whose study suffered from the introduction of an unbeautiful object in the background, because it happened to be there, was told that, 'One's study, even the most unpretentious, is always one's picture, and must be, in form and arrangement, a perfect harmony from the beginning.' With this unheard-of advice, Mr. Whistler turned to the students, whose work he had been inspecting, and intimated that they might begin to paint, and so really learn to draw, telling them that the true understanding of drawing the figure comes by having learned to appreciate the subtle modellings by the use of the infinite gradation that paint makes possible.

"A third visit, and a memorable one, took place on the following Wednesday.

"He turned to one student, and picked up her palette, pointing out that being the instrument on which the painter plays his harmony, it must be beautiful always, as the tenderly cared-for violin of the great musician is kept in condition worthy of his music.

"Before passing on, he suggested that it would be a pleasure to him to show them his way of painting, and if this student could, without too much difficulty, clean her palette, he would endeavour, before his present visit ended, to show them 'the easiest way of getting into difficulties!'

"And it was then that Mr. Whistler's own palette was generously given, for upon the one presented to him he made careful preparation in his own manner, sending for simple colours and placing them in his scientific and harmonious arrangement.

"Mr. Whistler's whole system lies in the complete mastery of the palette—that is to say, on the palette the work must be done and the truth obtained, before transferring one note on to the canvas.

"He usually recommended the small oval palettes as being easy to hold and place his arrangement of colour upon. White was then placed at the top edge in the centre, in generous quantity, and to the left came in succession: yellow ochre, raw Sienna, raw umber, cobalt, and mineral blue, while to right: vermilion, Venetian red, Indian red, and black. Sometimes the burnt Sienna would be placed between the Venetian and Indian red, if the harmony to be painted seemed to desire this arrangement, but generally the former placing of colours was insisted upon.

"A mass of colour, giving the fairest tone of the flesh, would

then be mixed and laid in the centre of the palette near the top, and a broad band of black curving downward from this mass of light flesh note to the bottom, gave the greatest depth possible in any shadow; and so, between the prepared light and the black, the colour was spread, and mingled with any of the various pure colours necessary to obtain the desired changes of note, until there appeared on the palette a tone picture of the figure that was to be painted—and at the same time a preparation for the background was made on the left in equally careful manner.

"Many brushes were used, each one containing a full quantity of every dominant note, so that when the palette presented as near a reproduction of the model and background as the worker could obtain, the colour could be put down with a generous flowing brush.

"Mr. Whistler also said, 'I do not interfere with your individuality.—I place in your hands a sure means of expressing it, if you can learn to understand, and if you have your own sight of Nature still.' Each student prepared his or her palette to suit individual taste—in some the mass of light would exceed the dark; in others, the reverse would be the case. Mr. Whistler made no comments on these conditions of the students' palettes:—'I do not teach Art; with that I cannot interfere; but I teach the scientific application of paint and brushes.' His one insistence was, that no painting on the canvas should be begun until the student felt he could go no further on the palette; the various and harmonious collection of notes were to represent, as nearly as he could see, the model and background that he was to paint.

"Mr. Whistler would often refrain from looking at the students' canvas at all, but would carefully examine the palette, saying that there he could see the progress being made, and that it was really much more important that it should present a beautiful appearance, than that the canvas should be fine and the palette inharmonious. He said, 'If you cannot manage your palette, how are you going to manage your canvas?'

"These statements sounded like a heresy to the majority of the students, and they refused to believe the reason and purpose of such teaching, and as they had never before even received a hint to consider the palette of primary importance, they insisted in believing that this was but a peculiarity of Mr. Whistler's own manner of working, and that, to adopt it, would be with fatal results!

"The careful attempt to follow the subtle modellings of flesh

placed in a quiet, simple light, and therefore extremely grey and intricate in its change of form, brought about, necessarily, in the commencement of each student's endeavour, a rather low-toned result. One student said to Mr. Whistler that she did not wish to paint in such low tones, but wanted to keep her colour pure and brilliant; he answered, 'then keep it in the tubes, it is your only chance, at first.'

"It was taught to look upon the model as a sculptor would, using the paint as a modeller does his clay; to create on the canvas a statue, using the brush as a sculptor his chisel, following carefully each change of note, which means 'form;' it being preferable that the figure should be presented in a simple manner, without an attempt to obtain the thousand changes of colour that are there in reality, and make it, first of all, *really and truly exist in its proper atmosphere*, than that it should present a brightly coloured image, pleasing to the eye, but without solidity and non-existent on any real plane. This it will be seen was the reason of Mr. Whistler's repeated and insistent commands to give the background the most complete attention, believing that by it alone the figure had a reason to exist.

"In the same way, or rather in insistence of the same important principles, he pointed out the value of the absolutely true notes in the shadow, for they determine the amount of light in the figure, and therefore its correct drawing as perceived by the eye, and he said that 'in the painting of depth is really seen the painter's power.'

"Mr. Whistler would often paint for the students.

"Once he modelled a figure, standing in the full, clear light of the *atelier*, against a dull, rose-coloured wall. After spending almost an hour upon the palette, he put down with swift, sure touches, the notes of which his brushes were already generously filled, so subtle that those standing close to the canvas saw apparently no difference in each successive note as it was put down, but those standing at the proper distance away noticed the general turn of the body appear, and the faint subtle modellings take their place, and finally, when the last delicate touch of light was laid on, the figure was seen to exist in its proper atmosphere and at its proper distance within the canvas, modelled, as Mr. Whistler said, 'in painter's clay,' and ready to be taken up the next day and carried yet further in delicacy, and the next day further still, and so on until the end.

"And it was insisted upon that it was as important to train the eye as the hand, that long accustoming oneself to seeing crude notes in Nature, spots of red, blue, and yellow in flesh where they are not, had harmed the eye, and the training to readjust the real, quiet, subtle note of Nature required long and patient study.

"'To find the true note is the difficulty,' was taught; 'it is comparatively easy to employ it when found.'

"He once said that if he had been given at the commencement of his artistic career what he was then offering, that his work would have been different. But that he found in his youth no absolute definite facts, and that he 'fell in a pit and floundered,' and from this he desired to save whom he could. 'All is so simple,' he would say, 'it is based on proved scientific facts; follow this teaching and you *must* learn to paint; not necessarily learn art, but, at least, absolutely learn to paint what you see.'

"It will be readily understood that he had no desire to have the ordinary 'roller through Paris' in his *Académie*, and so came about the rather stringent rules which caused much discussion and dissension.

"He also demanded the student to abandon all former methods of teaching, unless in harmony with his own, and to approach the science as taught by himself in a simple and trustful manner.

"Mr. Whistler once said to the students that 'there is one word that could never come to one's lips in the *Salon Carré* of the Louvre: How clever!—How magnificent! how beautiful! yes, but clever never!' And the student used to having any little sketch praised, and finding such efforts remained unnoticed by Mr. Whistler, while an intelligent and careful, though to their eyes stupid, attempt to model in simple form and colour, would receive approbation, grew irritated, and the majority left for a more congenial atmosphere.

"It was pointed out that a child, in the simple innocence of infancy, painting the red coat of the toy soldier red indeed, is in reality nearer the great truth, than the most accomplished trickster with his clever brushwork and brilliant manipulation of many colours.

"'Distrust everything you have done without understanding it. I mean every effort you have obtained without knowing how. Remember I am speaking always to the student, and teaching you how to paint.

"'It is not sufficient to have achieved a fine piece of painting.

You must know *how* you did it, that the next time you can do it again, and never have to suffer from that disastrous state of being of the clever and meretricious artist, whose friends say to him, What a charming piece of painting, do not touch it again—and, although he knows it is incomplete, yet he dare not but comply, *because he knows he might never get the same clever effect again.*

" ' Find out and remember which of the colours you most employed, how you managed the turning of the shadow into the light, and, if you do not remember, scrape out your work and do it all over again, for you are here to learn, and one *fact* is worth a thousand misty imaginings. You must be able to do every part equally well, for the greatness of a work of Art lies in the perfect harmony of the whole, not in the fine painting of one or more details.'

" It was many months before, finally, a student produced a canvas which showed a grasp of the science he had so patiently been explaining. Mr. Whistler delighted to show his pleasure in this, and had the canvas placed on an easel and in a frame that he might more clearly point out to the other students the reason of its merit; it showed primarily an understanding of the two great principles; first, it represented a figure *inside* the frame and surrounded by the proper atmosphere of the studio, and, secondly, it was created of one piece of flesh, simply but firmly painted and free from mark of brush. As the weeks went on, and the progress in this student's work continued, Mr. Whistler finally handed over to her [Mrs. Addams] the surveillance of the newcomers and the task of explaining to them the first principles of his manner.

" The *Académie* continued to receive much praise and much blame; at least, it had the distinction of causing the rumour that something was being taught there; something definite and absolute. But the inability to understand caused, in most cases, a bitter feeling of resentment and deep distrust, and there was a constant going and coming in the *Académie.*

" A large number of students who had been in the *Académie* for a short time and had left, again returned, dissatisfied with other schools (where ordinary weekly criticism of the usual kind was received). After the statements heard from Mr. Whistler they seemed strangely alone and unguided, and so they returned that they might once more satisfy themselves that nothing was to be learned there after all.

"Mr. Whistler allowed this to continue for some time. But, finally, the fatigue of such constant changes caused him to issue an order that the *Académie Carmen* should be tried but once.

"Most particularly were the students in the men's life class constantly changing. On Christmas Day, Mr. Whistler invited them to visit him in his *atelier* and showed them many of his own beautiful canvases in various stages of completeness; explaining how certain results had been obtained, and how certain notes had been blended; and assuring them that he used *au fond* the science he was teaching them, only that each student would arrange it according to his own needs as time went on, and begging them not to hesitate to ask him any question that they wished or to point out anything they failed to understand. There was an increased enthusiasm for a few weeks, but gradually the old spirit of misunderstanding and mistrust returned, and the men's class again contained but few students.

"Another disappointment to them was that Mr. Whistler explained, when they showed him pictures they had painted with a hope to exploit as pupils of the Master in the yearly Salon, that this was impossible—that their complete understanding of the Great Principles and the fitting execution of their application could not be a matter of a few months' study, and he laughingly told them that he was like a chemist who put drugs into bottles, and he certainly should not send those bottles out in his name unless he was quite satisfied with, and sure of, the contents.

"In February 1899, Mr. Whistler had copies made of *A Further Proposition* [from *The Gentle Art*, page 177], the opening paragraph slightly changed, and one was placed in English and one in French [the translation by M. Duret] on the walls of the two *ateliers*.

"And a month later, copies of *Proposition No. 2* [*Gentle Art*, page 115] were hung beside it.

"The last week of the *Académie's* first year arrived—and Mr. Whistler spent the whole of each and every morning there. The supervision of the students' work was so satisfactory to himself in one case that he communicated with the student, after the closing of the *Académie*, to announce to her that he desired to enter into an Apprenticeship with her, for a term of five years, as he considered it would take fully that time to teach her the whole of his Science and make of her a finished craftsman—with her artistic development he never for a moment pretended to interfere, or to

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AGNES MARY, MISS ALEXANDER

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have anything to do—' that,' he said, ' is or is not superb—it was determined at birth, but I can teach you *how to paint*.'

" So, on the 20th of July (1899), the Deed of Apprenticeship [with Mrs. Addams] was signed and legally witnessed, and, in the following terms, she ' bound herself to her Master to learn the Art and Craft of a painter, faithfully to serve after the manner of an Apprentice for the full term of five years, his secrets keep and his lawful commands obey, she shall do no damage to his goods nor suffer it to be done by others, nor waste his goods, nor lend them unlawfully, nor do any act whereby he might sustain loss, nor sell to other painters nor exhibit during her apprenticeship nor absent herself from her said Master's service unlawfully, but in all things as a faithful Apprentice shall behave herself towards her said Master and others during the said term. . . . And the said Master, on his side, undertakes to teach and instruct her or cause her to be taught and instructed. But if she commit any breach of these covenants he may immediately discharge her.'

" Into the hands of his Apprentice—also now the *Massière*—Mr. Whistler gave the opening of the school the second year, sending all instructions to her from Pourville where he was staying.

" Each new candidate for admission should submit an example of his or her work to the *Massière*, and so prevent the introduction into the *Académie* of, firstly, those who were at present incompetent to place a figure in fair drawing upon the canvas ; and, secondly, those whose instruction in an adverse manner of painting had gone so far that their work would cause dissension and argument in the *Académie*. Unfortunately, this order was not well received by some, though the majority were only too willing to accede to any desire on the part of Mr. Whistler.

" A number absolutely refused to suffer any rule, and preferred to distrust what they could not understand, and the talk among the students of the *Quartier* was now in disparagement of the *Académie*.

" Mr. Whistler continued his weekly visits, as soon as he returned to Paris, although he did not always attend the afternoon classes as before, but when he was unable to do so he always criticised the work after he had been round the *atelier*, and seen the studies which were then being worked upon in the morning class.

" He gave always the same unfailing attention, though to those who had just entered he would say little at first, leaving the *Massière* to explain the palette.

"Compositions were never done in the school. It was told that it was so much more important to learn to paint and draw Nature, for as Mr. Whistler said, 'if ever you saw anything really perfectly beautiful, suppose you could not draw and paint it!'—'The faculty for composition is part of the artist, he has it, or he has it not—he cannot acquire it by study—he will only learn to adjust the compositions of others, and, at the same time, he uses his faculty in every figure he draws, every line he makes, while in the large sense, composition may be dormant from childhood until maturity; and there it will be found in all its fresh vigour; waiting for the craftsman to use the mysterious quantity, in his adjustment of his perfect drawings to fit their spaces.'

"The third and last year (1900) of the *Académie Carmen* was marked at its commencement by the failure to open a men's life class. Mr. Whistler had suffered so greatly during the preceding years from their apparent inability to comprehend his principles and also from the very short time the students remained in the school, that at the latter part of the season he often refused to criticise in the men's class at all. He would call at the Passage Stanislas sometimes on Sunday mornings and himself take out and place upon easels the various studies that had been done by the men the previous week, and often he would declare that nothing interested him among them, and that he should not criticise that week, that he could not face the fatigue of the 'blankness' of the *atelier*.

"The *Académie* was opened in October 1900, by a woman's life class alone, and it was well attended. The school had been moved to an old building in the Boulevard Montparnasse. But shortly after, Mr. Whistler was taken very ill, and he was forced to leave England on a long voyage. He wrote a letter to the students, that never reached them; then, from Corsica, another, with his best wishes for the New Century, and his explanation of the Doctor's abrupt orders. The *Académie* was kept open by the Apprentice until the end of March, but the faith of the students seemed unable to bear further trials, and after great discontent at Mr. Whistler's continued absence and a gradual dwindling away of the students until there were but one or two left, the Apprentice wrote of this to Mr. Whistler who was still in Corsica (1901)."

Whistler at once wrote from Ajaccio a formal letter of dismissal to the few students left; kissing the tips of their

rosy fingers, bidding them God Speed, and stating the case from his point of view so that history might be made. The reading of the letter by the *massière* in the *atelier* closed the school, and with it, an experiment to which Whistler brought his accustomed enthusiasm, only to meet from the average student, the distrust in himself and his methods that the average artist had shown him all his life. One of the last things Whistler did before the close was to make an apprentice also of Mr. Clifford Addams, the one man who remained a faithful student. And in his case too a Deed of Apprenticeship was drawn up and signed.

The story of the *Académie* is carried on in the following letter from Mr. Frederick MacMonnies, concerning his connection with the *Académie Carmen* which brought him into nearer relations with Whistler:

" . . . . About the Carmen school. I was very much entertained by the whole affair—his sincere kindliness and fatherly interest in Carmen. I had always heard so much about his being impossible, &c., but the more I saw of him, the more I realised that any one who could quarrel with him must be written down as an ass.

" It seemed to me he was about what people call a perfect gentleman—as unflinchingly square an individual as I have ever known. I have always hoped to reach his age and retain whatever faculties I have, as he kept his, and if I could acquire the charming casual outlook at that usually dreary period I should die happy.

" An instance of his rare straightforwardness and entire frankness in friendship occurred in the Carmen School. He used to come up to my studio just before breakfast, and we would go off to Lavenue's or the *Café du Cardinal*.

" One morning he said he had a great affair on hand, Carmen was going to open a school and he had agreed to teach, a thing he had always said was shocking, useless, and encouragement of incapables. He suggested I help him out with teaching the sculptor pupils and the drawing, so I gladly agreed, and looked forward to high larks, as I was sure things would occur.

" All the schools in Paris were deserted immediately, and the

funny little studios of Carmen's place were packed with all kinds of boys and girls, mostly Americans, who had tried all styles of teaching in every direction.

"Mr. Whistler, having a full sense of a picturesque *grande entrée*, did not appear until the school was in full swing about a week after the opening, and until the pupils had passed the palpitating stage and were in a dazed state of expectancy and half collapsed into nervous prostration. The various samples of such awaiting him represented the methods of almost every teacher in Paris.

"He arrived, gloves and cane in hand, and enjoyed every minute of his stay, daintily and gaily touching, in the prettiest way very weighty matters. A few days after his arrival I went to the School and found the entire crew painting as black as a hat—delicate rose-coloured pearly models translated into mulattoes, a most astonishing transformation. As time went on the blackness increased. Finally, one day, I suggested to one of the young women who was particularly dreary, to tone her study up. She informed me she saw it so. I took her palette and keyed the figure into something like the delicate and brilliant colouring, much to her disgust. When I had finished, she informed me 'Mr. Whistler told me to paint it that way.' I told her she had misunderstood, that he had never meant her to paint untrue. Several criticisms among the men of the same sort of thing, and I left.

"Of course, all this was immediately carried to Whistler, and a few days later, after breakfast, over his coffee, he waved his cigarette in that effective hand of his, toward me, and said, 'Now my dear MacMonnies, I like you—and I am going to talk to you the way your Mother does (he used to play whist in Paris with my Mother, and they had a most amusing combination). Now you see I have always believed there has been something radically wrong with all this teaching that has been going on in Paris all these years in Julian's and the rest. I decided years ago the principle was false. They give the young things men's food when they require pap. My idea is to give them three or four colours—let them learn to model and paint the form and line first until they are strong enough to use others. If they become so, well and good, if not, let them sink out of sight.' I suggested the doubt that their eyes might in this way be trained to see wrong. No, he did not agree with that. Anyway, I immediately naturally apologised, and told the dear old chap I was a presuming and

meddlesome ass, and if I had known he was running his school on a system, I would have remained silent. If you could have seen the charming manner, his frank kindness and friendly spirit with which he undertook to remonstrate, you would understand how much I admired his generous spirit, which I believe was a fruit of his great originality of mind.

"Few men under the circumstances (I being very much his junior) would not have made a great row and got upon their high horses, and we would have quit enemies.

"Later, I found that the sculptor pupils did not arrive in droves to be taught by me, and the drawing criticisms unnecessary, as the School had become a tonal modelling school and my criticisms superfluous. I proposed to Mr. Whistler that I was *de trop*, and that it could only be properly done by him; he agreed and I left.

"M. Rodin (or his friends) wished to take my place, but Mr. Whistler, I heard, said he could not under any circumstances have any one replace MacMonnies, as it might occasion comment unfavourable to me. Now I consider that one of the rarest of friendly actions, as I knew he would not have objected to Rodin otherwise.

"A canny, croaking friend of mine, who hated Whistler and never lost an opportunity of misquoting and belittling him, dropped in at my house a few nights after my resignation from the School, quite full up with croaks of delight that we had fallen out, as he supposed, and that the row he had long predicted had finally come off. I laughed it off, and after dinner a familiar knock, and who should be ushered in but Mr. Whistler, asking us to play another game of whist.

"A rather amusing thing occurred in my studio.

"A rich and very amusing rather spread-eagle young American got into a tussle of wits with Whistler—neither had met before—(Whistler however knew and liked his brother)—on the advantage of foreign study and life abroad. I cannot remember all the distinguished and amusing arguments or the delightful appreciation of the French people of Whistler, or of the rather boring and rather brutal jabbing of the young man. At any rate, Whistler defended himself admirably, always keeping his temper, which the young man wished him to lose in order to trip him up, I saw that Whistler was bored, and tried to separate them, but it had gone too far. Finally, Whistler held out his hand and with his charming quizzical smile said, 'Good-bye, oh, ah, I am so glad to have met you—on account of your brother!'

"The year before Whistler died, in December, I went to America, on a short trip. I hadn't been home for a number of years. Whistler had always said he would go back with me some time, so I telegraphed him at Bath, to induce him to come with me. He replied by telegram, 'Merry Xmas, *bon voyage*, but I fear you will have to face your country without me.'

"I am so sorry I can't give you more interesting things about one of the few men I have met for whom I have an unbounded admiration and affection."

To any one familiar with art schools, Whistler's idea appeared revolutionary, but he knew that he was merely carrying on the tradition of Gleyre's teaching. The average art school is now conducted on such totally different principles that a comparison may be useful. The usual drawback is that the student is not taught how to do anything. The master puts him at drawing, telling him, after the drawing is finished, where it is wrong. The student starts again and drops into worse blunders because he has not been told how to avoid the first. If he improves, it is by accident, or his own intelligence, more than by the teaching. As soon as a pupil has learned enough drawing to avoid the mistakes of the beginner, and to make it difficult for the master to detect his faults, he is put at painting, and the problem becomes twice as difficult for the student. In drawing, each school has some fixed method of working, nowhere more fixed than at the Royal Academy, which leads to nothing. In painting, the professor continues to correct mistakes in colour, in tone, in value, which is easier than to correct drawing, and the student becomes more confused than ever, for he is in colour still less likely than in drawing to tumble unaided on the right thing. As to teaching him the use of colours, the mixing of colours, the proper arrangement of the palette, the handling of his tools—these are things neglected in modern schools. The result is that the newcomer imitates the older students—the favourites—and they all shuffle

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(*Pencil Drawing*)

along somehow. Any attempt on the part of the master to impress his character on the students would be vigorously resented by most of them, and any attempt at individuality on their part would be resented by everybody, for the average art school, like the average technical school, is the resort of the incompetent and the lazy. The Royal Academy goes so far as to change the visitors in its painting schools, that is the teachers, every month, and the confusion to the student handed on from Mr. Sargent, for example, to Mr. Frith, and then perhaps to Sir Hubert Von Herkomer, as may sometimes have happened, can easily be imagined.

For this sort of art school, Whistler had no toleration—its principal product was the amateur, he thought. When Mr. Dowdeswell asked him

> "Then you would do away with all the art schools?"

Whistler answered,

> "Not at all, they are harmless, and it is just as well when the genius appears that he should find the fire alight and the room warm, easels close to his hand, and the model sitting—though I have no doubt but that he'll immediately alter the pose!"

Whistler would have liked to practise the methods of the Old Masters. He would have taught the students, from the beginning, from the grinding and mixing of the colours. The only knowledge necessary for them to acquire was, in his opinion, how to use their tools so that there could never be a doubt as to the result. The pupil was not to be praised for an accidental effect, or criticised for a mistake he recognised himself, and the master's task was to give him confidence in his materials and certainty in their handling. Whistler believed that students, to acquire this knowledge, should work with him as apprentices worked with their master in earlier centuries. Artists then taught the student to work exactly as they did. How much individuality, save the

master's, is shown in Rubens' canvases, mostly done by his pupils ? So long as Van Dyck remained with Rubens, he worked in Rubens' manner, mastering his trade. When he felt strong enough to say what he wanted to say in his own way as an accomplished craftsman, he left the school and set up for himself. Raphael was trained in his trade in Perugino's studio, helped his master, and, when he had learned all he could there, opened one of his own. Whistler often said to us that Tintoretto never did anything for himself until he was forty. And this is exactly the way Whistler wished his students to work with him. The misfortune is that he waited to try the experiment until it was too late for him to profit by the skill of the apprentices whom he had trained to the point of being of use to him in his various schemes. He knew that it would take at least five years for students to learn to use the tools he put into their hands, and the fact that, at the end of three years, when the school stopped, a few of his pupils could paint well enough in his manner for their painting to be mistaken for Whistler's, shows how right he was. If, after five years, they could see for themselves the beauty that was around them, they would by that time have been taught how to paint it, for what he could do was to teach them to translate their vision on to canvas. Mr. Starr says that Whistler

> " told me to paint things exactly as I saw them. He always did. ' Young men think they should paint like this or that painter. Be quite simple, no fussy foolishness, you know ; and don't try to be what they call strong. When a picture smells of paint,' he said slowly, ' it's what they call strong.' "

Had his health been maintained during those last years, had he not been discouraged by the fact that students mostly came to him with the desire to do work which looked easy, great results would, probably, have been accomplished. His chief regret was that students who knew nothing did

not begin with him. Mrs. Addams has told us of the great success of one, Miss Prince, who had never been in an art school. She had nothing to unlearn. She understood, and, at the end of a year, had made more progress than any one else. Most of the students, elementary or advanced, in the *Académie Carmen* thought that Whistler was going to teach them how, by some short cut, they could arrive at distinction, better and quicker than elsewhere. When they found that, though the system was different, they had to go through drudgery as in any other art school, they were dissatisfied and left. Moreover, the strict discipline and the separation of the sexes were unpopular. Nor could they understand Whistler. Many of his sayings recorded by them explain their bewilderment.

One day, Whistler, going into the class, encountered three new pupils. To one of these, an American, he said:

"Where have you studied?"
"With Chase."
"You couldn't have done better!"
"And where have you studied?"
"With Bonnat."
"Couldn't have done better."
"Where have you studied?"
"I have never studied anywhere, Mr. Whistler."
"You could not have done better!"

To the young lady who told him one day that she was painting what she saw, his answer was, "The shock will come when you see what you paint!" To the man in the early days who was smoking, he said,

"Really, you had better stop painting, or, otherwise, you might get interested in your work, and your pipe would go out!"

Of a superior amateur he inquired:

"Have you been through college? I suppose you shoot—fish, of course?—go in for football, no doubt?—yes? Well, then I can let you off for painting."

We asked Whistler how much truth there was in these stories. His answer was,

> "Well, you know, the one thing I cannot be responsible for in my daily life is the daily story about me."

But he admitted that they were, in the main, true. He added one incident that we have heard from no one else and that has a more personal interest as it explains a peculiarity to which we have referred. In Venice, he said, he got into the habit, as he worked on his plates, of blowing away the little powder raised by the needle ploughing through the varnish to the copper, and, unconsciously, he kept on blowing even when painting or drawing. Once, at the school, after he had painted before the students and had left the studio, there was heard in the silence a sound of blowing from one corner. Then another student began blowing away imaginary things as he worked, and so they went on, one after the other. "*Tiens*," they said, "already we have *la manière*, and that is much." Whistler heard of it, and broke himself of the habit altogether.

Whistler's wit and his manner misled the average youth who studied with him, but the truth is that his interest in his pupils was as unbounded as their incredulity, and his belief in his method of instruction. He suggested once that his criticisms of their work should be recorded on a gramophone. He thought of opening another class in London. The only time E. saw the *Académie* towards the beginning of the second year the whole place was full of life and go. But, in the end, the want of belief in his methods, and his loss of health disheartened him, and his absence broke up the school. However, he sowed seed which, when it fell into good ground, was sure to bring forth a thousandfold.

CHAPTER XLVI. THE BEGINNING OF THE END. THE YEAR NINETEEN HUNDRED

IN the spring of 1900 an event of serious importance in our relations with Whistler occurred. Towards the end of May, after he had been in London a week or two, he asked us to write his Life. Now that his fame was established, a great deal, indeed far too much, was written about him. Various unauthorised publications appeared, others were in preparation, and it was evident that more would follow. Whistler shrank from being written about by people whom he knew to be out of sympathy with him, or incapable of appreciating his point of view, which to many critics and commentators was and remained a riddle. Absurd mistakes were made, facts were distorted, and often his indignation was great. At last, Mr. Heinemann suggested that, to save himself from these annoyances, the work of writing his Life should be entrusted, with his authority, to some one he did know and in whom he had full confidence. Mr. Heinemann first thought of asking W. E. Henley, but Whistler objected. Mr. Charles Whibley was next proposed by Mr. Heinemann, but again Whistler objected. It was after this that either Mr. Heinemann or Whistler mentioned the name of Joseph Pennell.

We had been abroad for a few days, and returned to London on May 28 to find a letter from Mr. Heinemann telling J. of this " magnificent opportunity." No one could appreciate more fully the honour, as well as the responsibility. He saw

Whistler at once to consider the scheme, though he said, "You are the modern Cellini and you should write it yourself." Whistler would have liked to do so but he never had the leisure. He promised to contribute what he could and we believe that, while staying at Whitehall Court, he wrote two chapters which he read to Mr. Heinemann, but he ultimately abandoned the task, as far as our book was concerned. One change of consequence to us was almost immediately made, Whistler arranging that we should do the work together, and not J. alone as was originally planned. Whistler promised to help us in every way and, when in the mood, to tell us what he could about himself and his life, with the understanding that we were to take notes. He was not a man from whom dates and facts could be forced. His method was not unlike that of Dr. Johnson who, when Boswell asked for biographical details, said, "They'll come out by degrees as we talk together." Whistler had to talk in his own fashion, or not at all, but we were to be ready to listen no matter where we met or under what conditions. It was also agreed that photographs should be taken of the works in his studio to illustrate the volumes and that they should be described. In those days, Whistler's pictures were carried off only too quickly, and whatever we needed for illustration, or as a record, would have to be reproduced at once.

The duty of making the notes fell to E., and, from that time until his death, she kept an account of our meetings with him. He was true to his promise. We were often in the studio, and we spent evening after evening together. Sometimes we dined with him at Garlant's Hotel or the Café Royal, sometimes we met at Mr. Heinemann's, but usually he dined with us in Buckingham Street, coming so frequently that he said to us one June evening:

"Well, you know, you will feel about me as I did in the old days about the man I could never ask to dinner because he was

always there! I couldn't ask him to sit down, because there he always was, already in his chair!"

Once he told E. to write to J., who was out of town, that he was living on our staircase now. During those evenings he gave us many facts and much material used in previous chapters of our book. He began by telling us of the years at home, his student days in Paris, his coming to Chelsea, and, though dates were not a strong point with him, we soon had a consecutive story of that early period. Every evening made us wish more than ever that he could have written instead of talking, for we soon discovered the difficulty of rendering his talk. He used to reproach J. with "talking shorthand," but no one was a greater master of the art than himself. And so much of its meaning was in the pause, the gesture, the laugh, the adjusting of the eye-glass, the quick look from the keen blue eyes flashing under the heavy eyebrows. The impression left with us from the close intercourse of this summer was that of his wonderful vitality, his inexhaustible youth. As yet, illness had not sapped his energy. He was now a man of sixty-six but only the greyness of the ever-abundant hair, the wrinkles, the loose throat suggested age. He held himself as erect, he took the world as gaily, his interests were as young and fresh, as if he were a youth beginning life. Some saw a sign of the feebleness of years in the little nap after dinner. But this was a habit of long standing, and after ten minutes, or less, he was awake, revived for the talk that went on until midnight and later.

Whistler wished us to have the photographing in the studio begun without delay. Our first meeting after all the preliminaries were settled was on June 2; on the 6th the photographer and his assistant were in Fitzroy Street with J. to superintend. It took long to select the things which should be done first, Mr. Gray, the photographer, picking out those which he thought would come best, Whistler

preferring others that Gray feared might not come at all, though the idea was that, in the end, everything in the studio should be photographed. Whistler found himself shoved in a corner, barricaded behind two or three big cameras and he could scarcely stir without shaking them. He grew impatient, he insisted that he must work. As the light was not good for the photographer, some canvases were moved out in the hall, some were put on the roof, but the best place was discovered to be Mr. Wimbush's studio in the same building. Then Whistler went with J. through the little cabinets where pastels and prints were kept and Whistler decided that a certain number must be worked on but that the others could be photographed at once. Then they lunched together, and then Whistler's patience was exhausted and everybody was turned out until the next day. This explains a few of our difficulties and the reason why our progress was not rapid.

We have spoken of the fever of work that had taken hold of Whistler. He dreaded to lose a second. He was rarely willing to leave the studio during the day, or, if he did, it was to work somewhere else, as when, to print his etchings, he went to Mr. Frank Short's studio. We have given Mr. Short's account of the printing. Whistler's, to us, was that he pulled nineteen prints before lunch and all the joy in it came back, but he did not return in the afternoon, because—"well, you know, my consideration for others quite equals my own energy." For himself he had no consideration, and in his studio work seldom stopped. We remember one late afternoon during the summer, when he had especially asked us to come to the studio, finding tea on the table and Whistler at his easel. "We must have tea at once or it will get cold," he said, and went on painting. Ten minutes later he said again, "We must have tea," and again went on painting. And the tea waited for a good half-hour before

he could lay down his brush, and then it was to place the canvas in a frame and look at it for another ten minutes. When even an invited interruption was to him a hindrance, he could not but find Mr. Gray, with his huge apparatus, a nuisance. A good many photographs were, however, made at Fitzroy Street, and Whistler, though he kept putting off any definite arrangement for completing the task, helped to get permission for pictures to be photographed elsewhere—wherever the photographer did not interfere with his own work. In this way, in England, America and on the Continent, all pictures which had not been reproduced, and to which access could be obtained, were photographed.

Nothing interested Whistler more this year than the Universal Exhibition in Paris and he and Mr. John M. Cauldwell, the American Commissioner, understood each other after a first passage at arms. Mr. Cauldwell, coming to Paris to arrange for the exhibition, with little time at his disposal and a great deal of work to do, had written to ask Whistler to call on a certain day "at 4·30 sharp." Whistler's answer was that, though appreciating the honour of the invitation, he regretted his inability to meet Mr. Cauldwell as he had never been anywhere "at 4·30 sharp," and it looked as if the unfortunate experience of 1889 might be repeated. But, when Whistler met Mr. Cauldwell, when he found how much deference was shown him, when he saw the decorations and arrangement of the American galleries, he was more than willing to be represented in the American section. He sent *L'Andalouse,* the portrait of Mrs. Whibley, *Brown and Gold,* the full-length of himself, and, at the Committee's request, *The Little White Girl,* never before seen in Paris. He brought together also a fine group of etchings, and when he learned that he was awarded a *Grand Prix* for painting and another for engraving, he was genuinely gratified and did not hesitate to show it. The years of waiting for the

official compliment so long deserved had not soured him and did not lessen his pleasure when it came. Rossetti retired from the battle at an early stage, but Whistler fought to the end and made the most of his hard-earned victory. He was dining at Mr. Heinemann's when he received the news, and they drank his health and crowned him with flowers, and he enjoyed it all as fully as he did the *fêtes* of his early Paris days. J. was awarded a gold medal for engraving at the same time and we also suggested that the occasion was one for general celebration, which was complete when Timothy Cole, another gold medallist, appeared unexpectedly as we were sitting down to dinner. Whistler could always make a ceremony of any reunion of this kind, and the more the ceremonial was observed, the more it was to his taste. He was pleased when he heard that his medals were voted unanimously and read out the first of the list to unanimous applause. There was one story in connection with the awards that amused him vastly. Though it was agreed that the first medals should not be announced until all the others were awarded, somehow the news leaked out and got into the papers. At the next meeting of the jury, Carolus-Duran, always gorgeous in his appearance, was more resplendent than ever in a flowered waistcoat. He took the chair, and at once, with his eye on the foreign contingent, said that there had been indiscretions among some of the members. Alexander Harrison was up like a shot: "*A propos des indiscrétions, Messieurs, regardez le gilet de Carolus!*"

During this time Whistler was paying not only for his rooms at the Hotel Chatham in Paris, but for one at Garlant's Hotel, in addition to the apartment in the Rue du Bac where Miss Birnie Philip and her mother were living, for the studios in the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs and Fitzroy Street, and lastly for the "Company of the Butterfly's" rooms in Hinde Street, Manchester Square. It was no light burden

THE LITTLE WHITE GIRL
(*Symphony in White, No. II.*)

though he had a light way of referring to them all as " my collection of *châteaux* and *pieds-à-terre*." His pockets were as full as he had always said he wanted them to be, but he could not get used to not having them empty. Once, afraid he could not meet one of his many bills for rent, he asked a friend to verify his bank account for him, with the result that six thousand pounds were found to be lying idle—and so the thing went on—a useless drain with no corresponding advantage.

Whistler, as a " West Point man," followed the Boer War with the same zest with which he had followed the Spanish War in 1898, but from a different standpoint. In this case, it was " a beautiful war " on the part of the Boers, for whose pluck he had unbounded admiration. From Paris, through the winter, he had sent us, week by week, Caran D'Ache's cartoons on the subject published in the *Figaro*. In London, he cut from the papers despatches and leaders that reported the bravery of the Boers and the blunders of the British, and carried them with him wherever he went. His own comments were witty and amusing, but naturally they did not amuse the " Islanders " whom, however, he knew how to soothe after he had exasperated them almost beyond endurance. One evening J. walked back with him to Garlant's and they were having their whisky-and-soda in the landlady's room while Whistler gave his version of the news of the day, which he thought particularly discreditable to the British army. Then suddenly, when it seemed as if the English landlady could not stand it an instant longer, he turned and said in his most charming manner, " Well, you know, you would have made a very good Boer yourself Madam." As he said it, it became the most amiable of compliments and the evening was finished over a dish of choice peaches which she hoped would please him. At times he grew excited with argument. Another evening,

the Boers were on the point of kindling a fatal war between himself and a good friend, when a bang of his fist on the table brought down a picture from the wall, and, in the crash of glass, the Boers were forgotten. No one who met him during the years of the war can dissociate him from this talk, and not to refer to it would be to give a poor idea of him as he then was. If he had a sympathetic audience, he went over again and again the incidents that, to him, were most striking: the wonder of the despatches; General Roberts' explanation that all would have gone well with the Suffolks on a certain occasion if they had not had a panic; Mrs. Kruger receiving the British army while the Boers retired, supplied with all they wanted though they went on capturing the British soldier wholesale; General Buller's announcement that he had made the enemy respect his rear. When he was told of despatches stating that Buller, on one occasion, had retired without losing a man, or a flag, or a cannon, he added, "yes, or a minute." He constantly repeated the answer of an unknown man at a lecture, who, when the lecturer declared that the cream of the British Army had gone to South Africa, called out, "whipped cream." The blunderings and the surrenderings gave Whistler malicious joy and he declared that as soon as the British soldier found he was no longer in a majority of ten to one, he threw up the sponge. He recalled Bismarck's saying that South Africa would prove the grave of the British Empire, and also that the day would come when the blundering of the British army would surprise the world, and he quoted as seriously "a sort of professional prophet" who predicted a July that would bring destruction to the British: "What has July 1900 in store for the Island?" he would ask.

There was no question of his interest in the Boers, but neither could there be that this interest was coloured by prejudice. He never forgot his own "years of battle" in

England, when, alone, he met the blunderings, mistakes and misunderstandings of artists, critics and the public. In his old age, as in his youth, he loved London for its beauty. His friends were there, nowhere else was life so congenial, and not even Paris could keep him long away from London. But it was his boast that he was an American citizen, that on his father's side he was Irish, a Highlander on his mother's, and that there was not a drop of Anglo-Saxon blood in his veins. He had no affection for the people who had persisted in their abuse and ridicule until, confronted by the first collection of his life's work, they were compelled—however grudgingly—to give him his due. This was why he often expressed the hope that none of his pictures should remain in England and emphasised the fact that his sitters at the end were all American or Scotch. He conquered, but the conquest did not make him accept the old enemies as new friends. In the position of the Boers he no doubt fancied a parallel with his own when, alone, they defied the English who, on the battlefield, as in the appreciation of art, blundered and misunderstood. Whistler's ingenuity in seeing only what he wanted to see and in making that conform to his theories was extraordinary. He could not be beaten because, for him, right on the other side did not exist. He came nearest to it one evening when discussing the war not with an Englishman, but with an American and a West Point officer into the bargain, whom he met at our flat and who said that there was always blundering at the opening of a campaign, as at Santiago, where two divisions of the United States army were drawn up so that, if they had fired, they must have shot each other down. It was a shock, but Whistler rallied quickly, offered no comment, and was careful afterwards to avoid such dangerous ground. Prejudice coloured all his talk of the English, whose characteristics to him were as humorous as his were incomprehensible to

them. It was astonishing to hear him seize upon a weak point, play with it, elaborate it fantastically, retaining always a sufficient basis of truth to make his ridicule strike home. The " enemies " suffered from his wit as he had from their density. His artistic sense served him in satire as in everything else. One favourite subject now was the much-vaunted English cleanliness. He had evolved an elaborate theory:

> " Paris is full of baths and always has been ; you can see them, beautiful Louis XV. and Louis XVI. baths on the Seine ; in London, until a few years ago, there were none except in Argyll Street, to which Britons came with a furtive air, afraid of being caught. And the French, having the habit of the bath, think and say nothing of it, while the British—well—they're so astonished now they have learned to bathe, they can't talk of anything but their tub."

The Bath Club he described as " the latest incarnation of the British discovery of water." His ingenious answer was always ready when any British virtue was extolled. He repeated to us a conversation at this time with Madame Sarah Grand. She said it was delightful to be back in England after five or six weeks in France where she had not seen any men, except two and they were Germans whom she could have embraced in welcome. A Frenchman never would forget that women are women. She liked to meet men as comrades, without any thought of sex at all. Whistler told her,

> " You are to be congratulated madam—certainly, the Englishwoman succeeds, as no other could, in obliging men to forget her sex."

A few days after, he reported another " happy " answer. He was with three Englishmen and a German. One of the Englishmen said,

> " The trouble is, we English are too honest—we have always been stupidly honest."

SEA

Whistler turned to the German,

> " You see, it is now historically acknowledged, whenever there has been honesty in this country, there has been stupidity."

His ingenuity increased with the consternation it caused, and the " Islander " figured more and more in his talk.

The excitement in China this summer interested him little less than affairs in South Africa, but for another reason. He was indignant not with the Chinese for the massacre of the European Ministers at Pekin, but with Americans and Europeans for considering the massacre an outrage that called for redress. After all, the Chinese had their way of doing things, and it was better to lose whole armies of Europeans than to harm the smallest of the beautiful things in that wonderful country. He said to us one day :

> " Here are these people thousands of years older in civilisation than we, with a religion thousands of years older than ours, and our missionaries go out there and tell them who God is. It is simply preposterous, you know, that for what Europe and America consider a question of honour, one blue pot should be risked."

The month of July in London was unusually hot and for the first time we heard Whistler complain of the heat in which, as a rule, he, the true Southerner, revelled. As we look back, we can see in this a sign of the increasing feebleness which his unfailing vivacity and gaiety kept us from suspecting at the time. He was restless, too, anxious to stay on in his studio and yet as anxious, for the sake of Miss Birnie Philip and her mother, to go to the country or by the sea. More than once, looking from our windows, he said that with the river there and the Embankment Gardens gay with music and people, we were in no need to leave town, and we were sure he envied us. One day he went to Amersham, near London, with some thought of staying there and painting two landscapes he had been asked for.

"You know, really, I can't say that, towards twilight, it is not pretty in a curious way, but not really pretty after all—it's all country, and the country is detestable."

Eventually he took a house at Sutton near Dublin, persuaded Mrs. and Miss Birnie Philip to go there, and then himself promptly went with Mr. Elwell to Holland. He told Mr. Sidney Starr once that only one landscape interested him, the landscape of London. But he made an exception of Holland. When he was reminded that there is no country there, he said,

"That's just why I like it—no great, full-blown, shapeless trees as in England, but everything neat and trim, and the trunks of the trees painted white, and the cows wear quilts, and it is all arranged and charming. And look at the skies!—They talk about the blue skies of Italy—the skies of Italy are not blue, they are black. You do not see blue skies except in Holland and here, or other countries, where you get great white clouds, and then the spaces between are blue! And in Holland there is atmosphere, and that means mystery. There is mystery here, too and the people don't want it. What they like is when the east wind blows, when you can look across the river and count the wires in the canary bird's cage on the other side."

He stayed a week at Domburg, a small sea-shore village near Middleburg. With its little red roofs nestling among the sand-dunes and its wide beach under the skies he loved, he thought it enchanting and made a few water-colours which he showed us afterwards in his studio. The place, he said, was not yet exploited, and at Madame Elout's he found good wine and a Dordrecht banker who talked of the Boers and assured him that they were all right, the Dutch would see to that. A visit, very little longer, to Ireland followed. He went full of expectations, for as the descendant of the Irish Whistlers he was an Irishman himself, we have heard him say more than once. We have a note of his stay there from Sir Walter Armstrong, Director of the National Gallery of Ireland:

"He took a house, 'Craigie' the name of it, at Sutton, six miles from Dublin, on the spit of sand which connects the Hill of Howth with the mainland (as the Neutral Ground unites 'Gib.' with Spain) on the north side of Dublin Bay. There he excited the curiosity of the natives by at once papering up the windows on the north side of the house, for half their height, with brown paper. He came to dinner with me one night, stipulating that he should be allowed to depart at 9·30 as he was such an early goer to bed. We dined accordingly at 7, and his Jehu, with the only closed fly the northern half of County Dublin could supply, was punctually at the door at the hour named. There he had to wait for three hours, for it was not until 12·30 that the delightful flow of Whistler's eloquence came to an end, and that he extracted himself from the deep armchair which had been his pulpit for four hours and a half. His talk had been great, and we had confined ourselves to little exclamatory appreciations and gazes of wrapt adoration! I spent an hour or two with him in the Irish National Gallery. I found him there, lying on the handrail before a sketch by Hogarth (George II. and his family) and declaring it was the most beautiful picture in the world. The only other remark on any particular picture which I can now recall is his saying of my own portrait by Walter Osborne, 'It has a *skin*, it has a *skin!*' He soon grew tired of Sutton and Ireland, and when I called at Craigie a few days after the dinner, he had flown. He did not forget to send a graceful word to my wife, signed with his name and Butterfly."

For work, the visit was a failure. The house was on the wrong side of the Bay, the weather was wretched, and only Chester, on the way home, was "charming and full of possibilities."

In September the frequent meetings were continued. The talk, drifting here and there, touched upon many subjects that belonged to no particular period but have their value coming from him and are characteristic of his moods and memories. Thus, one evening, when Mr. W. B. Blaikie was with us, and the talk naturally turned to Scotland, Whistler told stories of Carlyle. Allingham, he said, was for a time by way of being Carlyle's Boswell and was always at his

heels. They were walking in the Embankment Gardens at Chelsea, when Carlyle stopped suddenly: "Have a care, mon, have a care, for ye have a tur-r-ruble faculty for developing into a bore!" Carlyle had been reading about Michael Angelo with some idea of writing his life or an essay, but it was Michael Angelo, the engineer, who interested him. Another day, walking with Allingham, they passed South Kensington Museum. "You had better go in," Allingham said. "Why, mon, only fools go in there." Allingham explained that he would find sculpture by Michael Angelo, and he should know something of the artist's work before writing his life. "No," said Carlyle, "we need only glance at that."

Whistler's talk of Howell and of Tudor House, overflowed with anecdotes that have less to do with his life than that of the adventurer for whom he ever retained a tender regret, and the group gathered about Rossetti. He accounted for Howell's downfall by a last stroke of inventiveness when he procured rare priceless black pots for a patron who later discovered rows of the same pots in an Oxford Street shop. Whistler had a special liking for the story of Rossetti dining at Lindsey Row, at the height of the blue and white craze, and becoming so excited when his fish was served on a plate he had never seen before, that he at once turned it over, fish and all, to look at the mark on the back. Another memory was of a dinner at Mr. Ionides', with Rossetti a pagan, Sir Richard Burton a Mahommedan if anything, Lady Burton a devout and rather pugnacious Catholic. They fell into a hot argument over religion, only Whistler said nothing. Lady Burton, who was in a state of exaltation, could not stand his silence: "And what are you, Mr. Whistler?"—"I, Madam?" he answered, "why, I am an amateur!" He spent many evenings, drawing upon his memory of the "droll" and "joyous" things of the past; telling us more of them than

FIGURE WITH FAN
(*Chalk Drawing*)

we can ever repeat. But the past only brought him back with redoubled interest to the present, in which there was so much still to be done.

In October, we began to notice a change in his health and to understand that when he worried there was excellent cause for it. He was called over to Paris once or twice on business connected with his school and his "*châteaux* and *pieds-à-terre*." Late in October, after one of these journeys, he was laid up with a severe cold at Mr. Heinemann's; in November, he was confined for many days at Garlant's. He had other worries. It seemed as if the critics conspired either to ignore his success at the Paris Exhibition, or else to account for it in the way which to him was most distasteful. He was irritated when he read an article on the Exhibition, signed D. S. M. in the *Saturday Review* devoted altogether, he told us, to Manet and Fantin, with only a passing reference to himself:

> "Manet did very good work, of course, but then Manet was always *l'écolier*,—the student with a certain sense of things in paint, and that is all!—he never understood that art is a positive science, one step in it leading to another. He painted, you know, in *la manière noire*—the dark pictures that look very well when you come to them at Durand-Ruel's, after wandering through rooms of screaming blues and violets and greens—but he was so little in earnest that, midway in his career, he took to the blues and violets and greens himself. You know, it is the trouble with so many—they paint in one way—brilliant colour, say—they see something, like Ribot, and, dear me! they think, we had better try and do this too, and they do, and, well, really you know, in the end they do nothing for themselves!"

He was even more irritated with some of the other art critics who, in their articles, while not ignoring him, stated that his medal was awarded for *The Little White Girl*. The statement was offensive to Whistler because, he said:

> "The critics are always passing over recent work for early masterpieces, though all are masterpieces: there is no better, no

worse, the work has always gone on, it has grown, not changed, and the pictures I am painting now are full of qualities they cannot understand to-day any better than they understood *The Little White Girl* at the time it was painted."

This was an argument he often used. Only a few evenings after, he told a man, who suggested that Millet's later work was not so good because he was married and had to make both ends meet,

"You're wrong—an artist's work is never better, never worse, it must be always good, in the end as in the beginning, if he is an artist, if it is in him to do anything at all. He would not be influenced by the chance of a wife or anything of that kind. He is always the artist."

He was indignant because critics could not see a truth which to him was simple and obvious. His indignation culminated when the *Magazine of Art* not only said the *Grand Prix* was awarded for *The Little White Girl,* but protested against the award, because the picture was painted before the ten years' limit imposed by the French authorities, a protest that reappeared in other papers. Whistler could not bear this in silence, for it looked as if an effort would be made to deprive him of his first high award from a Paris exhibition. The attack was altogether unwarranted. Whistler's two other pictures were his most recent, and, as we have pointed out, *The Little White Girl* was specially invited. As soon as he was well enough, he came to us several times, with Mr. William Webb, his solicitor, to talk the affair over. As a result, an apology was demanded, and made. This belittling of certain pictures, in favour of others, with its inevitable inference, always offended him, in the end as in the beginning. Only friends, however, knew what he really felt. Mr. Sargent gives us a characteristic instance of his usual manner of carrying off the offence before the world. In his later years, somebody brought him a commission for a

painting, stipulating that it should be "a serious work." Whistler's answer was that he "could not break with the traditions of a lifetime," and so, no doubt, confirmed the old belief in his flippancy.

Another worry he should have been spared was a dispute with one of the tenants at the Rue du Bac, a trivial matter, which, in his nervous state, loomed large and made him unnecessarily miserable. The carpets of an old lady in the floor above him were shaken out of her windows into his garden, and it could not be stopped. He tried the law, but was told he must have disinterested witnesses outside the family. If he engaged a detective, a month might pass before she would do it again. But it chanced that, in the very act of beating a carpet, she, or a servant, let it fall into his garden, and his servants refused to give it up. The old lady went to law and his lawyer advised him to return the carpet. It depressed him hopelessly, and as he had long ceased to live in the Rue du Bac, we could not understand why he should even have heard of so petty a domestic squabble.

Ill and worried as he was, our work at intervals came to a standstill. When he felt better and stronger, the old talks went on, but at moments he seemed almost to fear that the book would prove an obituary. Once he told us that we wanted to make an Old Master of him before his time, and we had too much respect and affection for him to add to his worries by our importunity. With the late autumn his weakness developed into serious illness. By the middle of November he was extremely anxious about himself, for his cough would not go. The doctor's diagnosis, he said, was "lowered in tone: probably the result of living in the midst of English pictures." A sea journey was advised, and Tangier suggested for the winter. When he was well enough to come to us, he could not conceal his anxiety. If he

sneezed, he hurried away at once. He fell asleep before dinner was over, once or twice he could hardly keep awake through the evening. He would not trust himself to the night air until Augustine had mixed him a hot "grog." Tangier did not appeal to him, and he asked J. to go with him to Gibraltar, stay awhile at Malaga, and then come back by Madrid to see at last the pictures he had wanted to see all his life. He was hurt when J. represented that work made it impossible for him to leave London. In December Whistler gave up the struggle to brave the London winter, and decided to sail for Gibraltar, on the way to Tangier and Algiers, with Mr. Birnie Philip, his brother-in-law, to take care of him. His old friend, Sir Thomas Sutherland, Chairman of the P. and O. Company, assured him of every comfort on the voyage, and on the 14th of the month he started for the South.

CHAPTER XLVII. IN SEARCH OF HEALTH. THE YEARS NINETEEN HUNDRED AND ONE TO NINETEEN HUNDRED AND TWO

WHISTLER, away from London, was unhappy. At Tangier the wind was icy, at Algiers it rained, and everywhere when it was clear the sky was " hard " and the sea was " black." Snow was falling when he reached Marseilles and he was kept in his room during a couple of weeks, ill enough to send for a doctor and only comforted when he found the doctor delightful. Corsica was then recommended and as " Napoleon's Island " it attracted Whistler. As soon as he was well enough, Mr. Birnie Philip left him and he sailed alone for Ajaccio. Here he stayed at the Hotel Schweizerhof. The weather at first was abominable, so cold and the wind so treacherous that he could not work out of doors, and he felt his loneliness acutely. Fortunately he made a friend of the Curator of the Museum and Mr. Heinemann joined him for a time. They loitered about together in the quaint little town, went to see the house where Napoleon was born—" a great experience "—spent many rainy hours in the little *café* where Mr. Heinemann taught him to play dominoes, a resource not only then but for the rest of his life. They played for the price of their coffee, and Whistler cheated with a brilliancy that made him easily a winner, but that horrified a German who sometimes took a hand, though the *naïveté* of Whistler's " system " could not have deceived a child.

He was not altogether idle. He brought back afterwards a series of exquisite pen and pencil drawings begun at Tangier, many now owned by Mr. Richard A. Canfield and others by Miss Birnie Philip. A few water-colours were made, and when the weather gave him a chance, he worked on his copper-plates. J. had grounded them for him at the last moment in the damp cold of London, they were packed in among his linen, and taken out in the hot sun of Ajaccio. The result was that the varnish came off in the biting—" All my dainty work lost," he said—and it looked as if the great shadow had fallen upon our friendship. But he knew the fault was his, and the shadow passed as quickly as it came. The closing of the school in Paris occupied him in Ajaccio, and he was arranging for a new show of pastels and prints. One great pleasure of which he wrote to us, came from his " new honours " in Dresden where he was awarded a gold medal and elected " unanimously to the *Académie Royale des Beaux-Arts*." He was, however, more tired than he admitted in his letters, dwelling little on his fatigue, and insisting that the doctor in Marseilles had found there was nothing the matter with him. But the truth is, that he was never really strong after the autumn of 1900, and even earlier than this the doctor in London warned his friends that he was failing.

He was hopeful about himself because at Ajaccio he discovered what really was the matter with him:

> " At first, though I got through little, I never went out without a sketch-book or an etching plate. I was always meaning to work, always thinking I must. Then the Curator offered me the use of his studio. The first day I was there, he watched me but said nothing until the afternoon. Then—'But, Mr. Whistler, I have looked at you, I have been watching. You are all nerves, you do nothing. You try to, but you cannot settle down to it. What you need is rest—to do nothing—not to try to do anything. And all of a sudden, you know, it struck me that I had never rested, that I never had done nothing, that it was the one

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thing I needed! And I put myself down to doing nothing—amazing, you know. No more sketch-books—no more plates. I just sat in the sun and slept. I was cured. You know, Joseph must sit in the sun and sleep. Write and tell him so.'"

Certainly, he was sufficiently recovered to feel all his old joy in the "Islanders," into the midst of whom he fell on the P. and O. steamer from Marseilles:

'Nobody but English on board—and, after months of not seeing them, really they were amazing: there they all were at dinner—you know—the women in low gowns, the men in dinner jackets—they might look a trifle green, they might suddenly run when the ship rolled—but what matter—there they were—men in dinner jackets, stewards behind their chairs in dinner jackets—and so all's right with the country! And do you know—it made the whole business clear to me down there in South Africa—at home, every Englishman does his duty—appears in his dinner jacket at the dinner hour—and so what difference what the Boers are doing?—all is well with England! You know, you might just as well dress to ride in an omnibus!"

Whistler returned from Corsica at the beginning of May, in excellent spirits, so great was his pleasure to be again in his studio and among his friends. He came to us on the day of his arrival. We give one small incident that followed because we think it shows a certain simplicity in Whistler that he was careful to conceal from the world it was his amusement to mystify. It happened that J. was in Italy and E., that very afternoon, on her way back from the Continent. At our door he met our French maid starting for Charing Cross and he walked with her to the station, while she gave him the news. Her account was that everybody stared, which was not surprising. He, always a conspicuous figure, was the more so in his long brown overcoat, and round felt hat, *en voyage*, while she wore a big white apron and was *en cheveux*. Moreover, their conversation was animated. She invited him to dinner, promising him

dishes which she knew from experience he liked, and he accepted. He appeared a little before eight. "Positively shocking and no possible excuse for it," he said, "but—well—here I am!"

Work was taken up again in the studio, our old talks were resumed, his interest in the Boer War grew rather than lessened, the heat he had not found in the south was supplied for him in London in June and July, and from the heat he seemed to borrow new strength. He came and went, as of old, between Garlant's Hotel and Buckingham Street until he declared that the cabbies in the Strand knew him as well as the cabbies in Chelsea. It had ever been his boast that he was known to almost every cabman in London, as, indeed, he was. The tales of his encounters with them were numerous, for, if lavish in big things, he could sometimes be "narrow" in small, as Boswell said of Johnson, and his drives occasionally ended in differences. The only time we knew the cabby to score was once this year, when J. was walking from the studio with Whistler. "Kibby, Kibby," Whistler cried to a passing cab, not seeing "the fare" inside. The cabman drew up, looked him over, and said—as London cabmen have been heard to say before and since—"Where did you buy your 'at?—Go, get you 'air cut!" and drove off at a gallop. Even Whistler, safe inside an omnibus, laughed at his own discomfiture.

We were kept abroad a great part of the summer of 1901, and by the time we were all together again in the autumn, it was the same old story. His weakness returned with the cold and the damp and the fog. He realised the uselessness of keeping up his apartment and studio in Paris, the state of his health making it impossible for him to live in the one or to climb up to the other, and business in connection with closing them took him to Paris in October. Towards the beginning of the month he was ill in bed at Garlant's Hotel,

and towards the end at Mr. Heinemann's in Norfolk Street. Even when well enough to go out he was afraid to come to us in the evening: "Buckingham Street at night, you know, a dangerous, if fascinating, place!" He would not dine where he could not sleep, he said, "*J'y dine, j'y dort,*" and in our small flat he knew there was no corner for him. Early in November, he moved to Tallant's Hotel in North Audley Street and there he was very ill and more alarmed about himself than ever. "This time, I was very much bowled over, unable to think," he told us when we went to see him, and though he made a jest of it, he was depressed by his landlady's recommendation of his room as the one where Lord —— died. "I tried to make her understand," he said, "that what I wanted was a room to live in." He looked the worse, we thought, because in illness, as in health, he had the faculty of inventing extraordinary costumes. We remember finding him there, after he was able to get up, in black trousers, a white silk night-shirt flowing loose, and a short black coat.

Illness made Whistler still more of a wanderer, and for months he was denied the rest he knew he needed. From Tallant's, in November, he went to Mrs. Birnie Philip's in Tite Street, Chelsea. Here he never asked his friends, and we saw less of him. The first week in December he left London for Bath where he took rooms in one of the big crescents and where he thought he could work. Besides, there were shops in which to hunt for "old silver and things," in a vague way people seemed to know him, and, on the whole, Bath pleased him. He lost few excuses, however, for coming to London, and was in town almost all of January. On some days he was surprisingly well. He went to the Old Masters' Exhibition at the Royal Academy especially to see the Kingston Lacy *Las Meniñas,* and he told us the same day:

"It is full of things only Velasquez could have done,—the heads a little weak perhaps—but so much, or everything, that no one else could have painted like that. And up in a strange place they call the Diploma Gallery I saw the Spanish Phillip's copy of *Las Meniñas* full of atmosphere really and dim understanding."

Ochtervelt's *Lady Standing at a Spinet* also interested him, suggesting a favourite theme :

"The Dutchmen knew how to paint—they had respect for the surface of a picture, the modern painter has no respect for anything but his own cleverness and he is sometimes so clever that his work is like that of a bad boy, and I'm not sure that he ought not to be taken out and whipped for it—cleverness—well, cleverness has nothing to do with art—there can be the same sort of cleverness in painting as that of the popular officer who cuts an orange into fancy shapes after dinner."

There were one or two evenings when he risked the night air to come to us and his talk was as gay and brilliant as ever —reminiscent, critical, "wicked," as the mood took him, and at times serious. We always must remember his earnestness when he recalled the *séances* and spiritual manifestations at Rossetti's, in which he firmly believed. He could not understand, he said, the people who pretended to doubt the existence of another world and the hereafter. His own faith was strong, though vague when there was question of analysing it. Probably he never tried to reduce it to dogma and doctrine, and, in that sense, he was "the amateur" he described himself in jest. If his inclination turned to any special creed it was to Catholicism. "The beauty of ritual is all with the Catholics," he always said. But his work left him no time to study out these problems for himself, and his own belief perhaps was stimulated by the mystery in which it was lost.

On other days London apparently was tiring him and he dozed off and on through his visits to us, and came no more at

night. He expended only too much energy in sending some old pieces of silver to the doctor at Marseilles and the Curator at Ajaccio who had been kind to him. He was full of these little courtesies, and never forgot kindness, just as he never failed to show it to those who appealed to him, whether it was to find a publisher for an unsuccessful illustrator, or a gallery for an unsuccessful painter, or even, as we know happened once, to support a morphomaniac for months.

A shorter visit to town was made solely to attend a meeting of the International Society because his presence was particularly desired. This was one of the occasions that proved the sincerity and activity of his devotion to the Society and its affairs. It is a satisfaction that this devotion was appreciated and that the loyalty of the Council was not shaken during his lifetime. We have endeavoured to give some idea of the estimate in which he was held by artists at different periods in his career; it must therefore be interesting if we can also explain the impression he produced upon those who came into contact with him, or his work, at the last period of all, and this we cannot do better than by quoting two members of the Society over which he presided in his old age, and to the hour of his death. We quote first Mr. E. A. Walton, who was much with him at the last:

> "You have asked me to write and tell you what I know about Whistler's methods. I am afraid that more than I can give you, will be expected from a painter who knew Whistler, and his work as well as I did; but here is a simple statement of a few points which have struck me. You will notice that I do not use method in the narrow sense of the word, I do not tell how Whistler mixed his paints, or what brushes he used, but rather I use the word in its broadest sense meaning the general way in which Whistler approached his art.
>
> "To begin with, Whistler was a thorough craftsman; by that I mean he was completely master of his material, and knew to the full its power and also its limitations. This, I think, was an essential factor in his artistic success. Further, with regard to

his choice of subject, he had the power of finding subject-matter in everything around him. His moods were as varied as the seasons of the year, and he was possessed of a great craving to express himself, but he never lacked the means to do so, he always succeeded in obtaining ample motive in all that encompassed him from the shores of Valparaiso Bay to the Alleys of Soho. Indeed, he always made his surroundings his own, and reflected them in the most direct way, perfectly satisfied with what lay ready to his hand.

"I think it is true to say that Whistler's method involved as an integral part a certain attitude of mind. This attitude rendered him at once receptive of impressions (to use his own phrase, he loved Nature as her child, and knew her as her master), and at the same time it made him rightly disposed towards the work itself, in that it gave him a true ideal. This state or attitude was only attained through long and deliberate study, it was something that Whistler arrived at by set intention. To this attitude was added a fine æsthetic sense which was inborn, and it was this combination which formed his genius.

"Something of Whistler's method—its deliberateness and independence of choice—was explained to me by Whistler himself. He was talking one day of his work, 'If I had been apprenticed to Tintoretto . . .' he said musingly, and then, after some speculations he added, 'but how foolishly people talk of a Venetian secret!' My answer was, 'Yes, indeed.' 'Ah! but there is a secret!' retorted Whistler. 'What is it?' I asked. 'It is being able to go on, go on each day building up and hammering more and more into your work just as the coppersmith works out by degrees his beautiful shapes and surfaces.' The habit of many through ignorance is to start afresh each day on his canvas and so to hit or to miss. The hit even is generally a very momentary impression of their own feelings and of their subject. Such work as this one does not care to see more than once if even that. One might note, by the way, that Whistler's interpretation of the Venetian secret, 'To be able to go on,' can also be made the interpretation of the secret of the great master of Holland and him, Whistler admired above all others; although Whistler's work was more akin to that of Velasquez, and in some respects a contrast to Rembrandt's, it was Rembrandt nevertheless who won his chief devotion. Personally, I should say that the secret of Whistler's own success was that, in spite of the distinguished

individuality of his art, he remained throughout ever the student ever looking for something beyond; that he was never *arrivé*, that he had no superficial clevernesses, and did not repeat himself, never trading on his successes but always seeking for new inspiration.

"Mere manner of painting is often spoken of as method, there is really a complete distinction between them. Whistler's manner of painting changed from time to time, but his method, his relationship to, and mode of conducting his work, remained unaltered throughout. The changes in the manner of his painting were caused by his great sympathy with the work of his fellow artists. Even two such extremely different men as Courbet and his London neighbour, Albert Moore, affected him—and he was even influenced by the romantic type of head evolved by Rossetti. Whistler's artistic wisdom, however, was too great to allow him to fall into anything like ease of mannerism, the common failing of many clever men. Raeburn might be taken as one of the most conspicuous examples; he produced quantity with unpleasant ease and by the number of his works is he yet known to us. One only of Whistler's pictures is enough for a reputation, giving as it does inspiration to the artist who carries on the reputations of the great masters and establishes them in the knowledge of the amateur."

To Mr. Walton's appreciation, we add that of Mr. Morley Fletcher, who speaks more of the technical side of Whistler's art, and it is suggestive to compare the views of Whistler's technique expressed by an artist of distinction, with those of Mrs. Clifford Addams, who was still the student when she formed her impressions. Mr. Fletcher writes:

"Apart from the physical achievement of a Master in any branch of the Arts, and yet inseparable from it, is the legacy to those who follow him of a new revelation of technical power or resource.

"Whistler's work stood conspicuous and notable in a time of lost tradition—a time of rebellions and heresies, or of haphazard disregard of workmanship. In all his work, even to the time of his last studies, a continued effort is shown toward the research and recovery of obscured principles and of their right application. To use his own expression, he 'carried on the tradition.'

"This research, as well as the new possibilities he demonstrated, are a part of his achievement less obvious than his known successes, but full of significance and value to all who work with the instrument he used.

"One of his salient principles in painting was in the definition of the range of values legitimate to oil paint. He held that the only possible and consistent use of the material was that comprised within the limits of 'covered' paint. Following the tradition of such Masters as Velasquez and Franz Hals, he was opposed to any artificial enhancing of light tones or high lights by the glitter obtained from a broken surface of loaded paint, on the ground that such effects are variable with the chance position of the picture, and that fine control or a beautiful treatment of the material is impossible outside the limits of simple painting with the brush. He relied entirely on the power of simple 'covered' painting.

"Every kind of artifice and trick was in vogue for the enhancing of the apparent value of passages in painting by the glitter of broken and iridescent surface, so as to reach an almost literal appearance of nature. Whistler's strict refusal of these methods, confined his work at once within a limited and quiet range of tones strangely at variance with the style of his time. He was the Puritan of a period of meretricious technique.

"By this limitation of the range of values painting becomes an extremely subtle and delicate process. Within the relatively small range of luminous power obtainable from pigments, whose lightest tone is only that of 'covered' white paint, are to be expressed the relations and harmonies of the infinite range of natural light—an operation comparable in delicacy with that of the subtle control of planes in low relief in Sculpture as contrasted with reality in solid natural form; or, perhaps, more truly similar to musical expression. The most delicate instrument becomes necessary—the most perfectly organised palette.

"Only by means of a finely organised and scientific use of pigments could the perfectly controlled and true harmonies of the Nocturnes have been expressed. They are the rendering not of natural facts but of natural harmonies—the pictorial rendering of rhythm and harmony of natural effect; as it were the cadences of daylight.

"His palette was extremely limited. The highest power of yellow he allowed himself was Yellow Ochre. In Yellow he used

a descending scale of Yellow Ochre, Raw Sienna, Raw Umber ; correspondingly, in Red he used Vermilion, Venetian Red, Indian Red ; and in Blue, Cobalt and Mineral Blue.

"This simple grouping of pigments, without any of the modern resources of higher power—without Green or Orange or Violet—constitutes the colour power of his palette.

"Simple as it is, the expressive power of his palette was due to the use he made of white and black which together controlled every tone in its entire range. He held that no 'local' colour could exist nakedly in painting in its actual or unmodified character—that there could be no brush mark or note in a picture of an unmodified or raw pigment. To him all tones were modifications of grey, or of colour controlled by grey varying from nearly pure white to all but black. In this system of control he used his palette—limited in range, but, in his method of use, under precise and extremely delicate control. It was the perfect instrument for the music he played upon it.

"An extended power he seems never to have attempted or cared for. He painted no picture of full daylight tone. All his work is of the evening or of equally quiet indoor effect. He kept his studio curtained to a low tone of light. The few pictures he painted out of doors are of deliberately restrained range of colour, but the inter-relation of tone and colour within the limits he adopted, is perfectly true. Perhaps the passage of fullest power of colour is the painting of the two girls' heads in the *Symphony in White No. III.*—a remarkable passage of brilliant and pure colour.

"That he had difficulty with some of his schemes of work and in some failed to master his material was evident from the many unfinished portraits he left, such, for instance, as the *Iris* shown in the London Memorial Exhibition of 1905.

"Perhaps his practice of working over the whole surface of his canvas at one time was bound sometimes to lead to failure in such large work, while it was essential to his smaller and perfectly successful Nocturnes.

"In the initial and in the final stages of any work such a method is a necessity and an almost obvious rule of workmanship. The first planning and the last work of completion must be comprehensive and must involve all the large relations, but, in the intermediate stages of building, the need of concentration upon separate elements would seem to be equally insistent.

Whistler's unvarying practice in this respect has seemed to explain the strange fact that he never painted hands in his portraits, or else placed them in such positions as to make them nearly invisible. On this account he has been taxed with shirking or avoiding difficult problems of drawing—an accusation most futile to any one acquainted with the rendering of form in his many drawings, and such of his paintings as the *Blacksmith of Lyme Regis*. A much more reasonable cause is in his own insistent demand that all details or parts of a picture must be worked upon at one time, a counsel of perfection that exceeded possibility.

"His greatest technical successes are in the pictures painted with the least labour—the Nocturnes. Miraculous as is the achievement of the portrait of *Miss Alexander*, it lacks perhaps the sign of spontaneous treatment, which is so great a part of the poetic charm of the Nocturnes.

"These paintings stand as a new mark in the discovered region of the art of painting. In future no student can arrive at full mastery who has not comprehended this last development of the Tradition—a Tradition no longer taught by word of mouth, nor to be found in books, but none the less visible. In its search the last leader was Whistler and the last hint of new direction is in his work."

March saw Whistler once more established in Tite Street, but, as we have said, he asked no one while he stayed with "the Ladies," the name invariably by which he spoke of his mother- and sisters-in-law. There was one almost clandestine meeting with Mr. G. Sauter, Whistler's desire to hear about the Boers, to whom he "never referred, of course, in the presence of the Ladies," becoming too strong to be endured, and he could rely upon Mr. Sauter for both sympathy and the latest news. It was an interval of mystery in the studio. No one was invited, few were admitted, nothing was heard of the work being done. Whistler always liked to keep up a certain effect of mystery in his movements, but we have never known him to carry it so far as during the first month or so after his return from Bath. At last, J. was summoned. Whistler would not let him come

further than the little ante-room, talking to him through the thin partition, but presently, probably forgetting, called him into the studio and went on painting, and, to all appearances, there was no reason for any mystery. No doubt Whistler realised he had little strength left and was eager to devote that little to his work. But, even in ill-health, he could not live without people about him, and he soon fell back into his old ways.

To avoid further wandering, for which he no longer felt equal, he took another house, again in Chelsea, where he had lived almost thirty years; he had been absent hardly more than ten. Mrs. and Miss Birnie Philip went to live with him. The house, not many doors west of old Chelsea Church, was No. 74 Cheyne Walk, built by Mr. C. R. Ashbee, and it stood on the site of a fishmonger's shop of which Whistler had made a lithograph. There was a spacious studio at the back in which, in his words, he returned to his " old scheme in grey." Its only drawbacks were that, unfortunately for him, it was on a lower level than the street, reached by a descent of two or three steps from the entrance hall, and that the rest of the house was sacrificed to it. Two flights of stairs went up to the drawing-room where, in glass-enclosed cases running round the room, he placed his beautiful blue-and-white china. Kitchen and dining-room were on this floor, but another flight of stairs led to the bedrooms under the eaves. Almost all the windows opening upon the river were placed so high and filled with such small panes that little could be seen from them of the beauty of the Thames and its shores so dear to Whistler. The street door was in beaten copper and the house was full of decorative touches which, he said,

> " Make me wonder what I am doing here anyhow ?—the whole, you know, a successful example of the disastrous effect of art upon the middle classes."

Into this house he moved in April.

He reserved his energy now for his work and went out scarcely at all. "*J'y dine, j'y dort*" still held good, and his visits to us were chiefly on Sunday when he came for noonday breakfast, sometimes alone, sometimes to meet American and other friends. He did not even dare risk the dinner given by London artists this spring to Rodin who, however, breakfasted with him a day or two after. In connection with this breakfast we mention a curious little detail that shows how sensitive Whistler was on certain subjects. Mr. Lantéri and Mr. Tweed came with M. Rodin, and this is Whistler's account to us on the same day:

"It was all very charming. Rodin distinguished in every way—the breakfast very elegant—but—well, you know, you will understand. Before they came, naturally, I put my work out of sight, canvases up against the wall with their backs turned—nothing in evidence. And you know, never once, not even after breakfast, did Rodin ask to see anything, not that I wanted to show anything to Rodin, I needn't tell you—but in a man so distinguished, it seemed a want of—well, of what West Point would have demanded under the circumstances."

He was hurt because it was Rodin. No doubt Rodin thought, from the careful manner in which work was put out of sight, that he was not expected to refer to it. His opinion of Whistler we know, for he has written it to us:

"*Whistler était un peintre dont le dessin avait beaucoup de profondeurs, et celles-ci furent préparées par de bonnes études, car il a dû étudier assidûment.*

"*Il sentait la forme, non seulement comme le font les bons peintres mais de la manière des bons sculpteurs. Il avait un sentiment extrèmement fin, qui a fait croire à quelques uns que sa base n'etait pas forte, mais elle etait au contraire, et forte et sûre.*

"*Il comprenait admirablement l'atmosphère, et un de ses tableaux qui m'a le plus vivement impressionné, 'La Tamise (barrage) à Chelsea,' est merveilleux au point de vue de la profondeur de l'espace. Le paysage en somme n'a rien; il n'y a que cette grande étendue d'atmosphère, rendue avec un art consommé.*

"*L'œuvre de Whistler ne perdra jamais par le temps; elle gag-*

nera ; car une de ses forces est l'énergie, une autre la délicatesse ; mais la principale est l'étude du dessin."

In the studio, work was still going on. In May, Whistler showed us the portrait of Mr. Richard A. Canfield which he had just begun, Miss Birnie Philip was sitting to him, he was working on the portrait of Miss Kinsella, the *Venus*, the little heads, and he was adding to the series of pastels. He was much bothered about the show of his prints and pastels which M. Bénédite wished to make at the Luxembourg and he was anxious to hand over the details to J., who could not, however, see to them, as he was away constantly this year. Whistler looked forward to the show because of the official character it would have, though after recent purchases of pictures for the Luxembourg he said, " You know, really, I told Bénédite, if this goes on I am afraid I must take my ' Mummy ' from his Hotel."

He had not been many days in his new house before he discovered another drawback which it is to be regretted was not foreseen for him. He had hardly moved in before building was begun by Mr. Ashbee on a vacant lot next door. " It is knock, knock, knock all day," Whistler said, and his resentment was unbounded. When he came to us, he could think and talk of nothing else. In his nervous state the noise was a perpetual irritation, and, worse, the feeling that advantage had been taken of him and that he had not been informed of the nuisance beforehand put him into a violent temper. This was the one thing above all, the doctor declared, must be avoided as, excitement was bad for his heart. There was no mistaking the effect of this daily annoyance upon his health. He hoped for legal redress and he referred the matter to Mr. Webb. But the knocking continued. On June 17 E. dined with him at Cheyne Walk, the one other guest Mr. Freer, who had recently arrived from Detroit, and it seemed to her as if Whistler was fast losing the good done

him by the winter's rest and quiet. Mrs. and Miss Birnie Philip were both uneasy, and it came as no surprise to hear a few days later that he had left the house in search of repose and distraction in Holland, with Mr. Freer as his companion. It was too late. At The Hague, where he stayed in the Hotel des Indes, he was dangerously ill, at death's door. Mr. Freer remained as long as he could and Miss Birnie Philip and Mrs. Whibley hurried to take care of him. The moment was the most critical he had yet passed. There was no suggestion of it, however, in the first public sign he gave of convalescence. A stupid reporter telegraphed from The Hague that the trouble with Whistler was old age and that it would take him a long time to get over it. The *Morning Post* published an article that Whistler thought had been prepared in anticipation of death which, sparing him for the time, spared also the old wit. He wrote to beg that the "ready wreath and quick biography" might be put back into their pigeon hole for later use; in reference to the writer's description of his person, he apologised for "continuing to wear my own hair and eyebrows after distinguished *confrères* and eminent persons have long ceased the habit;" and those who read the letter in print could not imagine that, only a few days previously, his letter-writing in this world seemed to have come to an end for evermore. It is to be remembered also because it contains his last word about Swinburne, and it is pleasant to find that now the bitterness with which he wrote the more famous *Et tu Brute* of *The Gentle Art* had disappeared. The same article stated that Swinburne's verses inspired *The Little White Girl.* Whistler explained that the lines

> "were only written in my studio after the picture was painted. And the writing of them was a rare and graceful tribute from the poet to the painter—a noble recognition of work by the production of a nobler one."

After Mr. Freer had gone, Mr. Heinemann, at Whistler's urgent appeal, joined him in The Hague, a fortunate circumstance, as two charming old spinster cousins of his, the Misses Norman, were able to find for the patient every sort of comfort which was naturally out of reach of a stranger. They took rooms for him near the Hotel des Indes, suggested a nurse, prepared food for him, and interested The Hague artists in his presence. Mesdag, Israels and Van s'Gravesande were attentive. Afterwards, Van s'Gravesande wrote :

> "*Je l'ai beaucoup aimé. Whistler malgré tout son quarrelling avec tout le monde, c'était un 'très bon garçon' et tout à fait charmant entre camarades. J'ai passé quelques jours avec lui, il y déjà une vingtaine d'années, à Dordrecht, nous y avons fait des croquis, des promenades sur l'eau, &c. &c. J'en garde toujours un excellent souvenir. On ne peut pas s'imaginer un compagnon plus gentil que lui, enjoué, aimable, sans aucune prétention, enthousiaste, et avec cela travailleur comme pas un.*"

Whistler also enjoyed the society of his doctor—" the Court Doctor, quite the most distinguished in Holland." Mr. Clifford Addams came for a while from Dieppe, and in September E. was in Holland. Whistler was then so much better that he made the short journey from The Hague to Amsterdam, where she was staying, to ask her to go with him to the Rijks Museum and look at the *Effie Deans*, which he had not yet seen in the gallery, as well as the Rembrandts. It is not easy for her to forgive the chance that took her away from the Hotel before the telegram announcing his visit was delivered. She heard of him afterwards at Müller's book shop, where he had been in search of old paper, for which they said his demand in Amsterdam had been so great and constant that dealers now placed a fabulous price upon it. E. afterwards went to The Hague, where she found him in rooms that certainly in the last hours of packing looked bare and comfortless, for he had decided to start for London the

next day. He had promised to lunch with his doctor, so that she saw only enough of him to realise how frail and depressed and irritable illness had left him. His sisters-in-law told her that the doctor said he could keep well only by the greatest care and constant watchfulness, that he must not be allowed excitement, that he must not walk up many stairs.

Mr. G. Sauter was more fortunate than E., and we have from him his impressions of Whistler in The Hague when, with the first cheerful days of his recovery, his interest in life seemed to revive :

> "Realising the difficulty of conveying my vivid impressions, I have hesitated for so long to give you an account of our experiences with Whistler during the last days of August and the beginning of September 1902, in Holland, soon after the severe illness, which he suffered and which brought forth the premature obituary notice in a London paper, to which the master replied with his own facile pen.
>
> "A letter which I received in the beginning of August was sufficient proof that he was convalescent, and that he had regained his interest in many affairs, and that he was enjoying The Hague and the Hotel des Indes, but also that he was longing for the society of friends from London. Towards the end of August our journey to Belgium and Holland brought us to The Hague, and of course our first visit was to him.
>
> "It was indeed a pleasure to hear his gay voice, after he had received our card, calling down from the top of the stairs, 'Are you there—just wait a bit—I will be down in a moment.' In a few minutes his thin, delicately dressed figure appeared, in his face delight, gay as a schoolboy released from school and determined to have an outing.
>
> "He had then removed to apartments a few doors from the Hotel, but to the latter he invited us to lunch. With intense appreciation Whistler spoke of the attention and consideration shown to him by the Hotel people during his illness. All was sun like the beautiful sunny warm August day, and as if to give proof of his statements about the cooking, management, and everything, in the Hotel, he ordered lunch with great care.

" He was full of gaiety and his amusement over the obituary, and his own reply to it, was convincing enough that neither his spirit nor his memory had suffered.

" After lunch, Whistler insisted on taking us for a drive to show us the ' charming surroundings ' of The Hague and the Bosch. We drove also to Scheveningen. He was full of admiration and love for The Hague.

" On the way to Scheveningen the real state of his health became alarmingly evident. He looked very ill and fell asleep in the carriage, but to my suggestion to drive home and have a rest he would not listen.

" It was a glorious afternoon, and the calm sea with the little white breakers, the sand with hundreds of figures moving on it, and children playing in gay dresses, made a wonderful picture to enjoy in his company.

" About 5 P.M. we brought him to his rooms after arranging to visit the Mauritshuis together next day.

" About 11.30 next morning we met in the Gallery, and wandered from room to room. He was all alive and bright again, and there he showed particular interest in and affection for Rembrandt's *Father*, and spoke of it as a fine example of the mental development of the artist, which, he said, should be continuous from work to work up to the end.

" I mentioned that we were going to the Vieux Doelen to lunch to meet General De Wet ; his interest in this announcement was intense, and I had to promise to tell him all about it in the afternoon.

" On coming to the two portraits by Franz Hals he examined the work with undisguised delight, but the full disclosure of feeling towards the Master of Haarlem was reserved to us for the next day.

" On my saying ' we are going to Haarlem to morrow,' Whistler promptly replied, ' O, I might come along with you.'

" In his delicate state of health this reply was startling indeed, and realising the responsibility of allowing him to undertake even the small journey away from his rooms, and Doctor, I replied, ' but we are leaving by an early train.' ' O, then I might follow later on,' he finished.

" Thus we parted, he to his rooms, we to the Vieux Doelen.

" About 4 P.M. I went round to give him an account of my meeting with De Wet, which aroused the greatest curiosity, and many questions I had to face.

"When I asked him whether he had seen the Generals, he said, 'You see, I just drove round and left my cards on their Excellencies.'

"But still the journey to Haarlem occupied his mind, and before I left him it came out: 'Well, you are going to Haarlem early to-morrow? Perhaps I will see you there.'

"I certainly would never have dreamt for a moment that he would carry out what I took for passing fancy, and intense was my astonishment when next day about noon at the Haarlem Gallery I saw Whistler in the doorway, smilingly looking towards me, saying: 'Ah, I just wanted so see what you are doing.'

"From this moment until we took the train at the Haarlem Station back to The Hague, a nature revealed itself in its force and subtlety, its worship for the real and its humility before the great, combined with the experience of age, with the enthusiasm of youth.

"Hardly could I get Whistler away for a small lunch.

"We wandered along the line from the early *St. George's Shooting Guild* of 1616 down to the old women of 1664.

"Certainly no collection would give stronger support to Whistler's theory that a master grows in his art, from picture to picture, till the end, than that at Haarlem.

"We went through the life with Hals the people portrayed on the canvases, his relations with, and attitude towards, his sitters; he entered in his mind into the studio to examine the canvas before the picture was started and the sitters arrived, how Hals placed the men in the canvas in the positions appropriate to their ranks, how he divined the character, from the responsible colonel down to the youthful dandy lieutenant, and how he revelled in the colours of their garments!

"As time went on, Whistler's enthusiasm increased, and even the distance between the railing and the picture was too great for this intimate discourse. All of a sudden, he crept under the railing close up to the picture, but lo! this pleasure could not last for long.

"The attendant arrived and gave him in unmistakable words to understand that this was not the place from which to view the pictures.

"And Whistler crawled obediently back from his position, but not discouraged, saying 'Wait—we will stay after they are gone' —pointing to the other visitors.

" Matters were soon arranged with the courteous little chief attendant down in the hall, who, pointing to the signature in the visitor's book, asked, ' *Is dat de groote Schilder* ' (Is that the great painter ?) and on my confirming it, pressed his hands together, bent a little on one side, opened his eyes and mouth wide, and exclaimed under his breath, ' Ach ! ' He was a rare little man.

" We were soon free from fellow visitors and watchful attendants, and no more restrictions were in the way for Whistler's outburst of enthusiasm.

" We were indeed alone with Franz Hals.

" Now nothing could keep him away from the canvases, particularly the groups of old men and women got their full share of appreciation.

" He went under the railing again turning round towards me, saying, ' Now, *do* get me a chair.' And after it was pushed under the railing, he went on, ' *And now, do* help me on the top of it.' From that moment there was no holding him back—he went absolutely into raptures over the old women—admiring everything—his exclamation of joy came out now at the top of his voice, now in the most tender, almost caressing whisper—' Look at it—just look—look at the beautiful colour—the flesh—look at the white—that black—look how those ribbons are put in. O what a swell he was—can you see it all—and the character—how he realised it '—moving with his hand so near the picture as if he wanted to caress it in every detail—he screamed with joy, ' Oh, I must touch it—just for the fun of it '—and he moved tenderly with his fingers, over the face of one of the old women.

" There was the real Whistler—the man, the artist, the painter —there was no ' why drag in Velasquez' spirit—but the spirit of a youth, full of ardour, full of plans, on the threshold of his work oblivious of the achievements of a life-time.

" He went on to analyse the picture in its detail.

" ' You see, *she* is a grand person '—pointing to the centre figure—' she wears a fine collar, and look at her two little black bows—she is the Treasurer—she is the Secretary—she keeps the records '—pointing at each in turn with his finger.

" With a fierce look in his eye, as though he would repulse an attack on Hals—and in contemptuous tone, he burst out, ' They say he was a drunkard, a coarse fellow, don't you believe it—they are the coarse fellows. Just imagine a drunkard doing these beautiful things ! '

" ' Just look how tenderly this mouth is put in—you must see the portrait of himself and his wife at the Rijks Museum. He was a swagger fellow. He was a Cavalier—see the fine clothes he wears. That is a fine portrait, and his Lady—she is charming, she is lovely.' In time, however, the excitement proved too much for him in his weak state, and it was high time to take him away into the fresh air. He appeared exhausted, and I feared a collapse after such emotions.

" During my absence in looking for a carriage, he went on talking to Mrs. Sauter. ' This is what I would like to do—of course, you know, in my own way '—meaning the continual progress of his work to the last. ' O, I would have done anything for my Art.' It was a great relief to have him safely seated in the carriage with us.

" Once there he soon regained his spirits and, as we had expected to meet Mrs. Pennell at the Gallery but looked in vain for her, we now drove from hotel to hotel in search of her, and on this expedition a truly Whistlerian incident happened. Stopping before one of the hotels, he requested to see the Proprietor, who appeared immediately at the side of the carriage, a tall, solemn-looking gentleman, with a long reddish beard, bowing courteously, but the gentleman could give no information about Mrs. Pennell's arrival at his Hotel. After minute inquiries about the place, Whistler turned to him asking, ' *Monsieur*, what hotel would you recommend in Haarlem if you would recommend any ? ' to which he promptly and seriously replied, ' *Monsieur*, if I would recommend a hotel in Haarlem I would recommend my own.' ' Thank you, *Monsieur ;* thank you,' responded Whistler, touching his hat, bowing slightly. And we drove on soon, to arrive at the Hotel where we intended to take tea, and rest.

" Soon we were happily settled on our return journey, in a special compartment, which he was, in his chivalrous consideration towards ladies, most anxious to reserve, as he put it, ' to make Mrs. Sauter comfortable—she is tired.'

" With it, a day full of emotions, amusement and anxieties came to an end—and, as it proved to Whistler, the last pilgrimage to Franz Hals.

" It needed no persuasion to keep Whistler at home after so fatiguing a day.

" But on our return to the Hotel late the next afternoon, we were told that he had called three times, and finally left a note

asking us to come round in the morning and also to bring him news of Mrs. Pennell.

"Monday was a *fête* day for Holland—the Queen's birthday, and the town gay with flags and orange streamers and happy holiday crowds.

"I went round early to keep him company and bring him the news he wished for.

"We sat at his window overlooking merry-go-rounds, little toy and sweet stalls and throngs of little children in their loyal smart frocks.

"'What a pretty sight—if I only had my water-colours here I could do a nice little picture,' he remarked.

"Dr. Bisschop had kindly arranged to take us and Mr. Bruckmann to the Gallery of Mesdag, and Whistler accepted an invitation to join us.

"There the Canalettos were of chief interest to him. Lunch at a *café*—another visit to the Mauritshuis, and tea at his rooms brought our stay to an end."

CHAPTER XLVIII. THE END. THE YEARS NINETEEN HUNDRED AND TWO TO NINETEEN HUNDRED AND THREE

WHISTLER came back to No. 74 Cheyne Walk, to the noise of building, to the bedroom at the top of the house—to the conditions against which the doctor's warning was most emphatic. When we saw him about the middle of September, he had been again very ill and was still confined to his room. On our next visit, within a few days, he was in bed, but he had been moved downstairs to a small room adjoining the studio, intended, no doubt, for a model's dressing-room. In one way it was an improvement, for there were no stairs and his studio was close at hand whenever he had strength for work ; but, in another, it was no improvement at all, for the one window looked out upon the street and the noise of children and traffic was added to that of the builders' knocking.

Except in this house, we never saw him after his return from The Hague. At times, in the winter and spring, he was able to go out in a carriage, but to us he never came again, for the three flights of stairs to our flat rose between him and us, an insurmountable barrier. Therefore we rarely saw him quite in the old way, there were seldom the old long and intimate talks, for he was not often alone in the studio. Miss Birnie Philip was usually with him, sometimes sitting apart with her knitting, and only rarely drawn into the conversation. Mrs. Whibley was frequently there, and before " the Ladies "

there were reservations in Whistler's talk, for with many things "the Ladies" were not to be "troubled." This involved a certain restraint in himself and often caused a sensation of oppression in his visitors. Then there was a coming and going of his models, visits from his doctors, his solicitor, his barber, and many other people who helped to distract him. His friends were devoted, encouraged by him and knowing how he welcomed any one who came from the world without, which was now inaccessible for him: Mr. Luke Ionides, oldest of all, Mrs. Whistler, Mr. Walton, who lived next door, Mr. Sauter, Mr. Lavery, Mr. and Mrs. Addams his apprentices, Mr. Arthur Studd his near neighbour: they all seemed to drift in and out almost daily. He was bored when left alone and unable to work—even though he had of recent years developed an extraordinary passion for reading; as a matter of fact, he was hardly ever lonely for he was surrounded as he always liked to be in his studio, and yet he seemed himself to feel the restraint of his condition and to grow restless, so that his wish at this time to rejoin Mr. Heinemann in "house-keeping" was only too natural to most of us.

Whistler was never himself after his illness in The Hague, though he had intervals when a little of his energy returned, and he worked and hoped. We knew at once on seeing him when he was not so well, for his costume of invalid remained strikingly original. He clung to an old fur-lined overcoat which he had long since worn into shabbiness. In his younger years he had objected to a dressing-gown as an unmanly concession, apparently he had not outgrown the objection, and on his bad days this shabby, worn-out overcoat was its unsatisfactory substitute. Nor did the studio seem the most comfortable place for a man so ill as he was. It was bare, with little furniture, as his studios always were, and he had not used it enough to give it even the air of a

workshop. The whole house showed the fact that illness was reigning there. The hall had a more unfinished, more unsettled, look than the entrance at the Rue du Bac, and it was sometimes strewn with the trays and odds and ends of the sickroom. Papers and books lay on the floor of the little drawing-room, in contrast to the wonderful array of blue and white in the cases. A litter of things at times covered the sideboard in the dining-room. Everywhere you felt the cheerlessness of a house which is not really lived in. When, during the winter, we saw Whistler in his big, shabby overcoat, shuffling about the huge studio, he struck us as so old, so feeble and fragile that we could imagine no sadder or more tragic figure. It was the more tragic because he had always been so much of a dandy, a word he would have been the first to use in reference to himself. We recall his horror once when he heard a story that represented him as untidy and slovenly. "I!" he said, "I, when if I had only an old rag to cover me I should wear it with neatness and propriety and the utmost distinction!" But no one would have suspected the dandy in this forlorn little old man, wrapped in a worn overcoat, hardly able to walk. On his bad days, however, there was not much walking about, and he lay stretched out on an easy chair, talking little, barely listening, and dozing. His nights were often sleepless—he had lost the habit of sleep, he told us—and as the day went on he became so drowsy that it seemed as if nothing could rouse him from what was more like a lethargic slumber than like sleep. Sometimes, sitting by the table where tea was served, he would rest his forehead on the edge of the table, fall asleep, and remain like that, motionless, for an hour and more. A pretty little cat, all brown and gold and white, that lived in the studio, was often curled up on his lap, sleeping too. His devotion to her was something to remember and we have seen him get up, when probably he would not have stirred for any human being, just to empty the

stale milk from her saucer and fill it up with fresh. A special message was sent to us later in the winter to announce the birth of her first kittens that also made the studio their home and became a source of endless mild distraction to the invalid.

When his good days came, he liked to play dominoes after tea and he cheated with his accustomed *naïveté*. He often kept J. for a game and sometimes for dinner with himself and Miss Birnie Philip in the studio, the climb to the dining-room being for him, now and to the end, out of the question. There were days when he would say he never could get back to work again, but others when he managed to work with not only the old vigour, but the old mastery. He had an Irish model, Miss Dorothy Seton, whose red hair was remarkably beautiful and whose face Whistler thought as remarkable, for it reminded him of Hogarth's *Shrimp Girl*. One afternoon J. found him painting the picture of her, with her red hair hanging over her shoulders and an apple in her hand, to which the title *Daughter of Eve* was eventually given. He was walking up and down the studio in high spirits, looking almost strong, and he seized J. by the arm in the old fashion and walked him up and down too. "Well, Joseph, how long do you think it took me to paint that, now?" and not for many weeks had he shown such animation as when he added, "It was done in a couple of hours this very morning." So far as we know, it was the last important picture he painted, and it was, as J. then saw it, an extremely fine example of his latest period. He must have worked on it again, however, for at the Paris Memorial Exhibition the bloom of its first beauty had faded from it. Now and then he worked on a portrait of Miss Birnie Philip and he was anxious to continue the portrait started a year or so before of Mrs. Heinemann, a lovely harmony which needed for its completion only a few more sittings, but, to the world's loss, these could not be

arranged. He saw to the cleaning of the *Rosa Corder* which Mr. Canfield, who was buying pictures, drawings and prints in the studio, bought this winter for two thousand pounds from Mr. Graham Robertson. Whistler telegraphed for us to come and look at it for the last time in England, "to make your *adieux* to her before her departure for America." When we arrived at the studio, he was better than he had been since his return from The Hague. He had slept eight hours and a half that night and he rejoiced in not being sleepy. He wiped the canvas here and there most tenderly with a silk handkerchief and kept turning round to ask triumphantly, "Isn't she beautiful?"

Mr. Canfield was sitting at this time again for his portrait, and during his stay in London he was very much in the studio where he was always welcome, not as a sitter only, but even as a friend. He seemed almost to have hypnotised Whistler, whom we heard say once that Canfield was the only man who had never made a mistake in the studio. We could not help regretting this because of Canfield's notorious reputation in New York, and because of the unpleasant things which were being said of Whistler's tolerance of the man. Whistler had been warned, but had sacrificed a friendship of years in his indignation at "a breath of scandal" against any one whom he had introduced to "the Ladies." In the early part of 1903 we received numerous letters and telegrams from correspondents of American papers in London, all re-echoing the question in the big New York dailies—"Is Whistler painting gambler Canfield?" Whistler's condition rendered any remark which might excite him impossible, and everybody now hesitated to suggest to him that Canfield was a very public character to include in one's private circle. Canfield's visits did not cease, and the one fact that reconciled us to his presence in the studio was that it resulted in one of Whistler's masterpieces. The portrait, *His Reverence*, ranks

THE GIRL IN BLACK

undoubtedly with *The Master Smith of Lyme Regis,* and is certainly the finest of his later portraits.

Whistler succeeded in keeping up many of his other interests. He often saw print dealers who came for his prints. On two memorable afternoons, Mr. David Kennedy brought the large MacGeorge Collection of Whistler's echings, which he had just purchased in Glasgow, for Whistler to look over, and, in some cases, we believe to sign them. He went through as many as he could, commenting on their state and their preservation. There were some he had not seen for years, and Mr. Ionides, who was present on one of the afternoons, seemed to know more about them than Whistler himself. Whistler soon tired, and was not to be revived even by the bottle of American cocktails which Mr. Kennedy, to his unqualified approval, also brought. Several times we arrived to find him going through the accumulations of " charming things " sent over when the studio in the Rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs was given up. Many that he did not find so charming, were, we understand, destroyed by him. On other days he read us some of his earlier correspondences—all the " wonderful letters " to the Fine Art Society during the Venetian period. And once, tired though he was, he insisted on reading to us just once more his letter to another dealer, who had threatened him with a writ and whom he warned of the appearance he would make,

> " with one hand presenting a Sir Joshua to the nation, with the other serving a writ on Whistler. Well indeed is it that the right hand knows not always what the left hand doeth."

In November, he sent the *Little Cardinal,* which had been at the Salon the previous summer, to the Portrait Painters' Exhibition. Some critics spoke of it as a work already seen, giving the impression, he thought, that it dated back many years. He wrote to the *Standard* to contradict this im-

pression. We called to see him on the afternoon the letter was written, and he was in great glee over it. He said :

> " The letter is one of my best. I describe Wedmore as Podsnap—an inspiration, isn't it ?—With the discovery of Podsnap in art criticism I almost feel the thump of Newton's apple on my head, and this I have said. Heinemann promises to take it himself to the Editor of the *Standard*, and really the whole thing has such a flavour of intrigue that I do believe it has made me well again ! "

He even planned to publish the criticism, his letter, the answers, and his final comments, a scheme begun but, owing to his feeble health, never carried out. To an exhibition of old silver at the Fine Art Society's he also paid much attention. He lent many of his finest pieces and insisted upon their being shown together in a case apart, and arranged according to his instructions. His silver, like everything else belonging to him, was a proof of his exquisite taste and faultless judgment. It was chosen not for historic interest nor for rarity, but for elegance of form and simplicity of ornament. The other collections in the exhibition were set out on red velvet ; his, with which he sent some of his blue and white china, was placed on his own simple white table linen marked with the Butterfly. After we had been to the exhibition, he asked us for every detail :

> " How did the white, the beautiful napkins look ?—didn't the slight hint of blue in the rare old Japanese stand and the few perfect plates tell ?—didn't the other cases seem vulgar in comparison ?—and didn't the simplicity of my silver, evidently for use, and cared for, make the rest look like Museum specimens ?

He examined the catalogue, found fault with it because the McNeill, of which he was so proud, was misspelt, and he could not understand why there were comparatively fewer entries and shorter descriptions of his case, than of others where history supplied a more elaborate text.

Notwithstanding his state, he forgot none of the old little

courtesies. When, in November, Mr. James Guthrie was elected to the Presidency of the Royal Scottish Academy, he telegraphed his congratulations and was repaid by his pleasure when Guthrie, still a member of the Council of the International, telegraphed back, "Warmest thanks, my President." On New Year's Day (1903), we received the usual card of good wishes it was his custom to send to his friends—a visiting card with greetings written by himself and signed with the Butterfly. Though he could not go to the meetings of the International, the business done at each had to be immediately reported and when the annual dinner was given he considered every detail, even to the point of revising the *menu* and sending special directions for the salad. One great pleasure was the degree of LL.D. conferred upon him by Glasgow University, at the suggestion of Mr. Guthrie and Professor Walter Raleigh. Mr. D. S. MacColl, at their request, we believe, and after consulting J., approached him first to make sure that the honour would be accepted. There was a gleam of the old "wickedness" when Mr. MacColl called. Whistler appointed a Sunday, asking him to lunch, but when he arrived at the appointed hour he was sent upstairs to the unused dreary drawing-room and supplied with *Reynolds'*, a radical sheet adored by Whistler because of its wholesale abuse of the "Islander." And Whistler said:

> "when at last he was summoned to the studio, I told him it was the paper that of course he always wanted to read at the Club but was ashamed to be seen with! And all through lunch I had nothing to say of art—I talked of nothing except West Point."

However, when Mr. MacColl had a chance to explain why he came, Whistler expressed his pleasure in receiving the degree. We recall the pains he took with his letter of acknowledgment after the official announcement came in March, his concern for the correct word and the well-turned phrase, his anxiety that there should be no mistake in the

Principal's title or the honorary initials after his name. It illustrates his indefatigable care for detail if we add that, before venturing to write the address, he sent a note, submitting it, next door to Mr. and Mrs. Walton, who were Scotch, he said, and would know. Another pleasure of the kind came from the deference shown him by the Art Department of the Universal Exposition to be held in the summer of 1904 at St. Louis. Early in 1903 Professor Halsey C. Ives, Chief of the Art Department, was in London and went with J. to call on Whistler and to ask him to serve as Chairman of the Committee, of which Sargent and Abbey and J. were members, for the selection of work by American artists in England. The invitation was also in its way a formal recognition of Whistler's position, and he accepted, though he did not live to occupy the post.

If his last months brought pleasures to Whistler, they were not without worries which he was little prepared to meet. News of books about him, in preparation or recently published, caused him infinite annoyance, especially as he had hoped to prevent all such enterprises by giving us his authority for the work to which his illness was a serious interruption. We found him one afternoon worrying himself almost into a fever over the latest attempt of which he had heard, and unable to think or talk of anything except the insolence of people who undertook to write about him and actually prepare a biography, without consulting him and his wishes. As he talked, he complained of pains in his back, and his restlessness was distressing to see. On another afternoon, we found him, on the contrary, happy and chuckling joyfully over Mr. Elbert Hubbard's *Whistler* in the *Little Journeys* series, published from the Roycroft Press. He read us passages :

"Really with this book I can be amused—I have to laugh I don't know how many people have taken my name in print, and, you know, usually I am furious. But the intimate tone of

this is something quite new. What would my dear Mummy—don't you know, as you see her with her folded hands at the Luxembourg—have said to this story of my father's courtship? And our stay in Russia—our arrival in London—why, the account of my mother and me coming to Chelsea and finding lodgings makes you almost see us—wanderers—bundles at the end of long sticks over our shoulders—arriving footsore and weary at the hour of sunset. Amazing!—it would be worth while, you know, to describe not the book but the effect on me reading it."

He was looking desperately ill the day he told us that Montesquiou had sold his portrait, and was not even consoled by the fact that Mr. Canfield was the purchaser so that it would, therefore, remain for the present at least in America. He was the more hurt because Montesquiou was a friend and, "you know, the descendant of a long distinguished line of French noblemen." There were unnecessary worries. Mr. Freer sent some of Whistler's pictures to the Winter Exhibition at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia. The artists, in their appreciation, awarded him the Academy's Gold Medal of Honour, and in order to give the pictures the place of greatest distinction, where they would look best, hung them before anything was installed, building up a screen for them in the most important room, and beginning the numbers in the catalogue with them. For some reason Mr. Freer did not approve of the hanging and seems to have misunderstood the motives for it. The secretary could make no change. As the incident was reported to Whistler he fancied a slight in the very arrangement which was meant to give him artistic precedence. A similar incident occurred in the Spring Exhibition of the Society of American Artists in New York where, also, Mr. Freer objected to the place chosen for Whistler's work. Whistler, as a result, was disturbed by the idea that American artists at home were treating him with indifference, or contempt, though this was at the time of all others when their acceptance of him as master was complete

and their eagerness to proclaim it publicly as great. Whistler went so far as to say that he never wished work of his to hang again in the Pennsylvania Academy, and in regard to the New York Exhibition he wrote protesting to the New York papers. The agitation and excitement did him no good and in his weakness such small worries were magnified into grave troubles. It is the more to be regretted, because, on all sides, in America, he was honoured. The *Sarasate* had been bought for the Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh, where to-day it is prized as one of the most important pictures in the gallery, and where we are sorry to see that it is going the way of some of his other paintings, and cracking. *The Yellow Buskin* was in the Wilstach Collection, Philadelphia, and *The Master Smith* and *The Little Rose of Lyme Regis* in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, and hardly an American collector of note was not making every effort to include Whistlers in his collection.

Whistler's health varied so during the winter that we were often encouraged to hope. But with the spring, hope lessened with every visit. To consult our notes is to realise more fully than at the time how gradually, but surely, the end was approaching. The afternoons of sleep increased in number with the increasing weakness of his heart. He could not shake off the influenza-cold which was dragging him down, and he lived in constant fear of infection from others if anybody even sneezed in his presence. "I can't risk any more microbes—I've had about enough of my own." At times his cough was so bad that he was afraid to talk and he would write what he wanted to say ; it was his tonsils, he explained. There were visits when, from the moment we came until we left, he worried, first because the windows were open, then because they were shut, and his impatience if the doctor's visit was delayed would have exhausted a stronger man. J. dined with him on May 14, when there was a rekindling of the old gaiety. He showed the portrait of Mr. Canfield, he

played dominoes for hours, at dinner, when a gooseberry tart was served, he apologised with all his old malice for the "Island." But after this there was no more gaiety for us to record. A few days later J. went abroad for several weeks, and Mr. Heinemann sailed for America. When he said good-bye to Whistler he was entrusted with innumerable commissions. He was to find out the truth concerning the treatment of Whistler's pictures in Philadelphia and New York, to discover who his new unauthorised biographers were, what artists and literary people were saying, what dealers were doing, and, when he returned, then they would "keep house together again." This was the moment when Mr. Heinemann actually took another flat, with the identical arrangements of his first, in Whitehall Court, so that they could go back to the old life with no change. But when, after not very many weeks, he was in London again, the end came before he had a chance even to see Whistler.

Luckily, while Mr. Heinemann and J. were away, Mr. Freer arrived in London on his annual visit, and he was free to devote himself to Whistler with whom he drove out whenever Whistler had the strength. But this was not for long and with her visit to him on July 1, E. gave up the possibility of hope. He was in bed, but, hearing that she was there, he sent for her. There was a curious vague look in his eyes, as if the old fires were all burnt out. He seemed almost in a stupor and spoke only twice with difficulty. Miss Birnie Philip referred to his want of appetite and the turtle soup, ordered by the doctor, which they got from the correct place in the City. "Shocking! shocking!" Whistler broke in slowly, and then after a minute or two, "You know, now we are all in the City!" Miss Birnie Philip wanted to give tea to E., who, however, seeing how ill he was thought it wiser not to stay and after some ten minutes said good-bye. "No wonder," Whistler murmured, "you go from a house where

they don't give you anything to eat." E.'s next visit was on the 6th. The doctor had been with him, he was up, dressed, and had been out for a drive. But he looked worse, his eyes vaguer and more dead, giving still the impression of a man in a stupor. He said not a word until she was leaving, and then the one remark was characteristic: "You are looking very nice."

Reports of his feebleness came to us from others. M. Duret, the friend of so many years, was in London, and was deeply moved by the condition in which he found Whistler, who, he thought, wanted to say things when alone in the studio with him, but who could not that day utter a word.

On the 14th E. called again, and again he was dressed and in the studio, and there were pictures on the easels. He seemed better, though his face was as sunken and in his eyes was that terrible vagueness. Now he talked, and a touch of gallantry was in his greeting, "I wish I felt as well as you look." He asked about Henley, the news of whose death had come but a day or two before. He watched the little mother cat as she ran about the studio. There was a sudden return of vigour in his voice when Miss Birnie Philip brought him a cup of chicken broth and he cried, "Take the damned thing away," and all his old charm was in the apology that followed, but, he said, if he ate every half-hour or so as the doctor wanted, how could he be expected to have an appetite for dinner? He dozed a little, only to wake up quickly with a show of interest in everything and when, on the arrival of Mr. Lavery, E. got up to go, fearing that more than one visitor would tire him, he asked, "But why do you go so soon?" and these were the last words he ever spoke to her.

When J. returned to town, on the 17th, he immediately started for Chelsea, but met Mr. T. R. Way who had been lunching with Mr. Freer and from whom he learnt that Whistler and Mr. Freer were to go out for a drive.

THE END

There was no drive that afternoon—no drive ever again. The illness had been long, the end was mercifully swift. Whistler was dying before Mr. Freer could reach the house in Cheyne Walk. On Thursday he had seemed much better, had gone for a drive and was so well at dinner that Mrs. Whibley told him laughingly he would soon again be dressing to dine. But after lunch on Friday she was called hurriedly to the studio, where Miss Birnie Philip already was, and she realised at once how serious the attack was. The doctor was sent for, but all need for him had passed.

The papers during the next few days showed the degree to which Whistler's reputation and fame had grown with the public. We saw another side which the public could not see—the genuine affection and respect in which he was held by those privileged to know him more intimately. Many came to us in the first shock the news gave them. M. Duret, his grief intense at the loss of the last of his old comrades—Manet had gone, then Zola, and now Whistler, with whom the best hours of his life were spent; Mr. Kennedy, whose business relations with Whistler had developed into warm friendship; Mr. Lavery, Mr. Sauter, Mr. Harry Wilson, whose one thought was to show their love and reverence for their dead President. Other artists followed, others wrote, and our sorrow for the friend we had lost was tempered by the satisfaction of knowing how deep and widespread was the regret for the master who had gone. Mr. Heinemann returned from New York, just too late to see Whistler again, and both he and J. were at least spared the sad memory of Whistler with the life fading from his face and the light extinguished in his eyes.

The funeral took place on Wednesday, July 23. The service was held in old Chelsea Church to which he had so often walked with his mother from Lindsey Row. There was a comparatively small attendance. The members of

his family who came were his sister-in-law, Mrs. William Whistler and his nieces, Mrs. Thynne and Mrs. Réveillon. The Society with which, in his last years, he had identified his interests was represented by the Council. Here and there were friends, Mr. and Mrs. Edwin A. Abbey, M. Théodore Duret, Sir James Guthrie, Mr. John Lavery, Mr. Heinemann, Dr. Chalmers Mitchell, Mr. Jonathan Sturgis ; and here and there Academicians, Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema and Mr. Alfred East. But Whistler, who valued official recognition, was given none at the end. No one from the American Embassy paid the last tribute of respect to the most distinguished American citizen who ever lived in London. No one from the French Embassy attended the funeral of the officer of the Legion of Honour. No one from the German Embassy joined in the last rites of the member of two German Royal Academies and the Knight of the Order of St. Michael of Bavaria. Nor was any one present from the Italian Embassy though Whistler was Commander of the Crown of Italy and member of the Academy of St. Luke. The only body officially represented besides the International was the Royal Scottish Academy.

The coffin was carried the short distance to the church, along the shores of the river he made his own. It was covered with a purple pall, upon which lay a wreath of gold laurel leaves sent by his Society. The little funeral procession that walked with the coffin from the house to the church included Miss Birnie Philip, Mrs. Charles Whibley, their sisters, brother and nephews, but none of his own family, none of the little group with whom he had been most intimate in his last years. After the burial service was read, the procession re-formed, and the family, the Council of the International and a few friends went with him to the graveyard at Chiswick. It was a grey, stormy summer day, and as the clergyman said the last prayers for the dead, and the coffin

WHISTLER'S PALETTE

WHISTLER'S GRAVE

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was lowered, the thick London atmosphere enveloped the green enclosure with the magic and mystery that Whistler was the first to see and to reveal to the world. The grave was made by the side of his wife's under a wall covered with clematis. A low railing, like the trellis in the garden at the Rue du Bac, with flowers growing over it, now shuts in the little unmarked plot of ground where Whistler, the greatest artist and most striking personality of the nineteenth century, lies at rest in a peaceful corner of the London he loved, not far from the house, and nearer the grave, of Hogarth, who had been to him the greatest English master from the days of his boyhood in St. Petersburg.

APPENDIX

Few things would have given more pleasure to Whistler "as a West Point man" than the knowledge of the deep impression he made upon his fellow cadets and the vivid memory of him they retain. For this reason we have all the greater satisfaction in printing the letters of the distinguished officers who have helped us in our story of Whistler's days at the Military Academy, which, as we have shown, he himself remembered with special pride. The longest and fullest account comes from General Loomis L. Langdon, who was unflagging in his efforts to find and obtain material for us:

"I entered West Point in June 1850, and in June 1851 passed my examination and entered the 'Third Class.' Whistler reported June 3, 1851, passed the examination for admission, and was, of course, assigned to the 'Fourth Class.' He was, therefore, in the class just below mine.

"Whistler evidently had the experience of some good schooling. He had considerable knowledge of French and algebra and a marked proficiency in English grammar, and he had read much of the best English literature, so his first year was an easy task, but his second and third years were miserable failures.

"His conversational powers were soon recognised, as were his various accomplishments and good breeding, while his witty remarks and original views and sayings, often verging on the sarcastic, could not fail to attract attention. But his intercourse with the other cadets was, with few exceptions, confined to his own class. The distinctions between the different classes were very sharply drawn. Whistler was a Fourth Classman or a 'Pleb' during his first year, and nothing in his antecedents, family, character or mental equipment would lift him into anything but the most formal intercourse with the youths of the classes above him. 'Plebs' were mere 'things,' sometimes playfully spoken of

as 'animals,' and often the subjects of practical jokes and cowardly and disgraceful 'hazing.' Such was the case in those days. Since then a better discipline and the amenities as well as necessities of the popular football game have, I suppose, broken down some of the barriers between the classes.

"There were those who divined in Whistler the dawning of an unmistakable genius. But the aristocracy of the sword, that shapes the destinies of nations, has no use for a genius other than the Napoleonic. And life at the Academy is so fully filled with professional work that there is no time for the cadets to sympathise with a genius if they would, or to wander aside from the hard, beaten path of routine duties into the fields of the fanciful and the artistic. Unflagging industry, self-denial, concentration to duty, implicit obedience to orders and regulations, and proficiency in studies are the requirement for success at West Point, where no favouritism is shown to the incompetent through family or political influence. The standard of excellence adhered to may be estimated by the fact that, in those days at least, hardly more than a third of those who were admitted to the Military Academy ever graduated.

"That was evidently no place for a genius. And many a man who rose to distinction in after-life has had to regret that he was 'found deficient' at West Point. A remarkable instance of this is found in the case of Edgar Allan Poe, the critic and poet, who, after having been appointed a cadet by the President himself, served as a cadet only eight months and five days when he was dismissed, March 6, 1831, by sentence of a general court-martial for 'gross neglect of duty' and 'disobedience of orders.'

"As an illustration of the lack of appreciation of the genius in Whistler, I may mention the following: As a matter of curiosity, I asked a general officer, whose reputation as an able writer and man of science is world wide, and who knew Whistler well, 'How was Whistler looked upon by the older cadets?' His answer, which reinforces what is said above, was: 'Well, he was tolerated.' Which, I imagine, was his way of saying the older cadets held Whistler in higher esteem than they held others of his—the lower—class.

"Whistler, bound to get out of life all that was to be had in the way of enjoyment, was never unemployed. Like his father before him, he was addicted to pranks, not malicious, but harmless to every one except himself. . . .

"Whistler lived in the barracks near me. As I took great delight in pictures, not so common as they are now, and I stood at the head of my class in drawing and painting and he at the head of his class in the same branches, we had a common interest; the distinction of classes was never thought of between us. He was often in my room and there made sketches in Indian ink, while he rattled on, now with some droll story, and now with sarcastic remarks about the administration of affairs by the academic authorities, meant only for my ears. It was always a treat for me whenever he came to my room. Indeed, we painted a large picture together; he the figures and I the landscape part. It was for my class-mate, Cadet Wright. Poor Wright committed suicide by throwing himself from a train two years after graduating, this not because we had painted a picture for him, but during a spell of what is now called nervous depression.

"The battalion of cadets was divided into four companies; A B C and D. Whistler and I were in 'C' company, and when the company was 'sized,' or the men arranged from right to left according to their height, Whistler was generally near me, and often right behind me, in the rear rank. The little rascal took advantage of this to try and get me laughing in ranks; forgetting, if I were caught at it, I would get 'skinned,' *i.e.*, reported and incur demerit marks. Thackeray was one of our favourite authors, and we two had been reading *Pendennis* at the same time, and not seldom discussed the characters that figure in it. There is one scene, near the end of the book, that he keenly appreciated and to which he often referred. It is where 'Alias' (or Altamont) escapes from the police by scrambling hastily out of a back window of 'Captain' Strong's room, in which also dwelt, on sufferance, his Irish friend, an ex-army officer, Captain Costigan the father of 'the Fotheringay,' and sliding, hand over hand, down the broken, ramshackle gutter-pipe. Whistler liked to rehearse old Costigan's comments on the means of escape he had suggested to 'Alias,' and he took particular delight, occasionally, in whispering them to me when we were in ranks and required to be as silent as the tomb. At many a 'dress parade' when we were all standing at 'parade rest,' as motionless and gravely dignified as the statues in the halls of the Vatican, when to raise a hand to brush aside a fiercely persistent mosquito assailing the helpless cadet's nose was an unpardonable offence, I would be day-dreaming of home and the blue waters of old Erie, as the band

marched slowly past our front to the strains of delicious, soul-inspiring music, when a muffled whisper from right behind me, in the rear rank, would shatter my reverie and then I could hear that little imp, Whistler, quoting, in a rich Irish brogue, Captain Costigan, for my special benefit: 'I was reminded of that little *sthrategem* by remembering me dorling Emelee, Lady Mirabel, when she acted the puart of Cora in the plaie and by the bridge in Pizarro, bedad!'

"The incongruity of such remarks, though not by any means novel, in a scene so impressive, where all else was so solemnly in earnest, always excited my risibles, and the effort to restrain my laughter always drew from Whistler a chuckle of satisfaction.

"Whistler's room-mate was Cadet Childs, a son of Lieutenant-Colonel Childs of the old First Regiment of Artillery, a veteran of the Mexican War and who had died of yellow fever at Pensacola, Florida. Whistler announced the important discovery that Childs was properly the plural of child—whereupon he dubbed his room-mate '*Les Enfants*.'

"A large part of Whistler's leisure time, during 'release from quarters,' was spent in the rooms of his class-mates and friends, who were in my class. When thus visiting he was never idle, but while chatting in his witty and inimitable way, was busy making for his hosts sketches in pencil or Indian ink of figures, single or in groups, peculiar to cadet life, or imagined scenes from Dumas' and Hugo's novels. *The Three Guardsmen*, then very popular, was a favourite with him, and with his class-mate, Cadet Vinton, who stood well in drawing and often sketched the same subjects with Whistler, and then the two compared their work for the entertainment of their common friends.

"Almost invariably Whistler gave his sketches to his hosts, who have preserved them to this day, Cadet Sawtelle of my class, and Cadet Alexander Webb of Whistler's class, both now generals on the retired list, still have in their possession several of these earlier and characteristic sketches, while a number are in the hands of the family of Colonel Black, who was in my class and a life-long friend of Whistler. He fought in the Confederate army during the 'late unpleasantness,' became a prosperous iron-mine owner and died some years ago at Blackville, S.C.

"I graduated from the Academy early in June 1854, really before Whistler's class came up for examination, nor did I know his fate for a long time, and then, much to my deep regret, I

learned he had been 'found,' *i.e.*, failed, to pass the examination. In the official records it is stated he was 'discharged June 15, 1854, for deficiency in conduct and chemistry.'

"'Deficiency in conduct' sounds badly, but really it does not imply the commission of any very serious offences. Demerit marks were given for the slightest deviation from the strictest rule of conduct, from a spot of rust on a musket-barrel down to having the nightmare during the Sunday morning services in the chapel. A 'late' falling into ranks was one demerit; underclothes not properly piled on shelves, with folded edges out, two demerits; smoking six demerits. The offensive cigarette and its accompanying disgusting trick of exhaling the smoke through the nostrils were not known in those days at West Point. One hundred demerits during the second year deprived the cadet of his much-coveted furlough, and two hundred in a year caused discharge from the Academy. The more serious offences were reserved for a general court-martial which might cause a dishonourable dismissal from the service.

"Colonel Wheeler, Professor of Engineering at West Point some years ago, and member of the Academic Board, told me the story of Whistler's failure to pass the examination in chemistry. Silica constitutes about seven-eighths of the earth's surface, and, at the examination of his class before the Academic Board and the Board of Visitors, Whistler was told to discuss the subject of silica, one of the simplest subjects in the whole course. Whistler began his recitation by the astounding announcement: 'Silica is a saponifiable gas!' That finished him. It is inconceivable that Whistler did not know better. But it is easily believed that, knowing from the weekly exhibit of the bad marks for his daily recitations, he was sure to be found deficient, he promptly and purposely made an answer so magnificently absurd that it would be crystallised into a tradition of Whistler.

"I never saw him again until I met him in 1879—twenty-five years after we left school. Then I met him at the *Café Florian* in Venice. He was then at the zenith of his fame as an artist and was engaged in making etchings of Venetian scenery. I saw him often on the quays, busy at his work, and long talks did we have, recalling the old days, and exchanging bits of information relative to the histories and fates of mutual friends, many of whom had passed over to the great majority.

"I was very glad to take him by the hand again, glad of his

success, and pleased to see that he had retained his bright, attractive manner.

"Let me add that I have been always glad that I knew him at West Point, during what I believe was the happiest part of his life, and that I remember him as a most genial and considerate friend and as an honest and fascinating gentleman, who seemed always to move in a sunny atmosphere that brightened the lives of his friends and was to them like an inspiration."

General D. McM. Gregg, who was in the class with Whistler, writes:

"Our class was in number less than the average class of the Academy of that period, and, notwithstanding the sectional differences that disturbed our country at the time, and soon thereafter resulted in the War of the Rebellion, ours was a singularly united class. We were as one in our close friendships. We knew each other well and intimately. After more than fifty years, I can see Whistler as a cadet. He was rather under size for his age.

"He was not soldierly in appearance, bearing or habit. In our first year at the Academy, he rolled up one hundred and ninety (190) demerits. Two hundred would have caused his dismissal. The bulk of his demerits were received for being late at, and absence from, roll-call, for inattention at drill, for untidiness in dress, and offences of such character.

"By his class-mates he was sometimes addressed as 'Jimmy,' at others as 'Curly,' this last because of the tendency of his hair to curl. His wonderful talent as an artist had early development and recognition. In his intercourse with his fellow cadets, he was agreeable and companionable. At that time he gave no indication of possessing traits of character that in later life produced so many antagonisms. After he left the Academy, I never had the pleasure of meeting Jimmy Whistler, but I fully shared the pride of all his class-mates, that one of their number had attained such world-wide fame in his chosen profession."

General C. B. Comstock, who graduated at the head of Whistler's class, writes more in detail:

"We entered West Point together in 1851, and as I try to recall him, the memories that present themselves are of a vivacious likable little fellow, with a near-sighted habit of contracting his

brows and eyes when he looked at anything ; with a fondness for cooking things in his quarters ; and with a great love for drawing.

" In those days cadets had the custom of taking potatoes from the mess hall to their rooms, cooking them over the gaslight and calling the result hash. Whistler was an adept at this and some other forms of cooking, all of which were prohibited. He was constantly making sketches with pen or pencil, which were given to his class-mates, who prized them highly for their beauty, and who often asked them of him. His ways differed somewhat from ours, and we attributed this to his residence abroad. We used to call him ' Jimmie ' or ' Jimmie Whistler.'

" Drawing seemed to be a passion with him. One of the Academic Board told me later, that at his examination they used to pass round Whistler's text-books with great interest, finding their margins illustrated with sketches of all kinds—sometimes with caricatures of themselves. He had a high standing in drawing and in French, but I think he cared little for mathematics, which was prominent in the course at West Point. He was not very observant of rules and regulations, and if I recall it aright, sometimes got into trouble in consequence.

" There was at West Point a small shop called ' Joe's,' where cadets were allowed to buy cakes, &c., if they had money to do so. I think Whistler used to visit ' Joe's ' pretty often.

" There was another place, called ' Benny Haven's,' about a mile below the Point, where one could get a supper and stronger drinks than ' Joe ' was allowed to furnish. Visits to ' Benny Haven's ' were usually at night after ' taps,' and if detected were severely punished.

" I cannot clearly recollect the fact, but have the impression that Whistler used to go there.

" There were on the Point two maiden ladies who were allowed to give meals (to a few cadets) that were better than those supplied at the mess hall. I think both Whistler and his room-mate, Francis L. Vinton, of our class (later Professor of Mining and Engineering at Columbia College, and now dead), at one time took their meals at the old ' maids' ' as we called them. Whistler's taste for delicate food would naturally take him there in case of a vacancy."

General Henry L. Abbot sends us a few lines :

" Whistler was a member of the class following mine, but I

remember him well. His *forte* did not lie in military or studious lines, but his genius in drawing and painting was appreciated throughout the corps. I remember a water-colour sketch showing the faces of the fat boy in *Pickwick* and the old lady when he told her he had seen Mr. Tupman kissing her daughter. It was a mere half-finished sketch, but so wonderfully expressive that it was a masterpiece."

General Oliver Otis Howard remembers Whistler

"in the next class to mine, that which entered in 1851. My recollections of him are rather dim, though I met him on and off duty for nearly two years of his academic life. It was said of him by his class-mates that he paid more attention to reading library books than to his studies proper, and that being so absorbed in reading and sketching, he was somewhat careless of his military standing.

"The demerit marks would not indicate any moral obliquity as they are given for 'lates,' 'absences,' and small deviations from the strict regulations of the Academy. The number of demerit marks would run up rapidly where a young man failed to write excuses for, say, 'clothing out of order,' 'room not in proper police,' and the like."

General G. W. C. Lee, also in the class before Whistler, also retains memories still fresh:

"We were cadets together at the U.S. Military Academy, West Point, N.Y., for three years (1851–1854), and during the session of 1852–1853 our rooms in barracks were not far apart. For this circumstance I am indebted to a better acquaintance with him than I should otherwise have had, as the cadets of one class had usually but little to do with those of another.

"Cadet Whistler was an original genius and consequently entertaining, and was much liked by those who knew him. He did not, I think, take much interest in the several departments of instruction, with the exception, perhaps, of that of drawing in which he easily stood first. He was in the habit of making pen-and-ink sketches of whatever struck his fancy: and he made them with great facility—apparently without effort. His class-mates thought that his drawings showed a great deal of talent, and, doubtless, his instructors in drawing were of the same

opinion. After he left West Point in the summer of 1854, I met Whistler in Washington City, and had a short conversation with him about his affairs and prospects, but never saw him afterwards, as I left the city about that time, and did not return until about four years afterwards."

ORIGINAL SKETCH BY WHISTLER FROM HARMONY IN BLUE AND GOLD

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